SOURNESS, SWEETNESS, BITTERNESS AND SPICINESS:

DIASPORA NARRATIVES AND SHIFTING IDENTITES AMONGST TAIWANESE PEOPLE LIVING IN THE UK

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ABSTRACT

The sense of my shifting diasporic identity prompted a curiosity about how other Taiwanese diaspora change their identities. In order to unravel the mysterious identity shifting, I recruited a group of Taiwanese people, who have lived in the UK for various reasons for three years minimum, from the internet and real life to conduct my study. By using the methodology of collective biography/collective memory-work, which is developed from Germany, Australia then to the UK, and from German to English, my participants are required to have literacy skills of English and Chinese. After four workshops of doing collective memory-work, I had collected stories of four different environmental settings of the workshops, the writings from all participants and email exchanges amongst us. To make the diaspora narratives more complete, I supplemented my autoethnography with the collective biography.

This study focused on two main factors – language and culture. Linguistics, however, was excluded in this case, and alternatively, I drew attention to how the relation between language proficiency and self confidence impacted upon our diasporic identities. In addition, I also explored the relationship between writing and identity, which played a crucial role in collective biography, even the whole study. As this was a participant-oriented study, under the big umbrella of culture, I chose certain aspects that had been stressed during the workshops. Our awareness of cultural difference had been shown in food, space, weather, greetings, attitudes and values, which all affected our diasporic identities in terms of emotional, cultural and geographical displacement. In the last chapter, I inspected my reflexive musing about the whole study and thoughts about the feasibility of collective biography for Taiwanese people in the future.

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This thesis is dedicated to my mum, dad, my lovely nephew and my dear grandma. I hope they all have happy lives and grandma is happily smiling at me from the heaven!

AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this dissertation was carried out in accordance with the requirements of the University's Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes and that it has not been submitted for any other academic award. Except where indicated by specific reference in the text, the work is the candidate's own work. Work done with the assistance of Jane Speedy is indicated as such. Any views expressed in the dissertation are those of the author.

SIGNED: ..... DATE:.....

CONTENTS

PROLOGUE

7th August 2004, 3 PM Taiwan time, home

A blazing hot day as usual, the sun was hung in the sky. I looked out of the window wondering how many hours I would remain in the killing hot weather until it had gone down. I almost could see the road burning and tyres melting. People sat in the shade of their houses chatting to each other as if they could moan the heat off. With people's eyes narrowed against the shining sun, I could not tell whether they were happy or not. Did I care? No, I didn't. I only wanted to remember all these scenes that I might not be seeing for a long time.

Grandma, uncles, aunties and cousins have been singing cheerfully with the Karaoke machine upstairs for hours. They sounded happy to me. Mum and dad were with me checking through my suitcase and made sure everything had been packed in. All in! Zipped it shut! Mum and dad seemed not to know what to do now. Right! Time was up. I had to go upstairs and say goodbye. Dragging my legs up to where they were singing, I was thinking how to start to say goodbye. The most awkward situation I had had to face.

I opened the door, looked into their eyes and informed them I was leaving. Grandma came to me.

"I don't know if you will see me again, Ying-Lin. Two years are a long time, you might not see me by the time you come home." she said.

This was the most dreadful thing that I could ever think of. I hated to be reminded that grandma might be going to the end of her life in a few years time. I was going to the other side of the world, an experience she could never imagine. It made me feel guilty that I could no longer see her or stay by her side when she needed her family around. My heart sank and felt sadder than ever. I was on the verge of tears.

I stood by the door, took her hand and said "It won't happen. No worries, grandma. I will come back in time, and you will still be alive."

I knew I was lying. I knew I might stay longer than two years. I knew her candle had already been burnt towards the end. I could stand the emotional moments no longer. I had to dash off.

5 PM Taiwan time

I had checked in, wandering around with mum, dad, brother and nephew in the hall at the airport. Uh-oh, another awkward moment. I held my four-year-old nephew in my arms and a photo was taken with my beloved family.

"What time is it? What time does the airplane depart?" said mum.

"Don't be late for it," said dad.

"I know, nearly there. I am watching the time," I said.

"Auntie, are you going to the UK? When are you coming back?" nephew asked in the sweetest voice.

"Two years. Will you miss me?" My heart was going to melt.

"Of course I will, I will miss you soooooo much! Auntie, you must miss me," he kissed me on cheeks.

"I definitely will," I had to leave or they would see me in tears.

I put him down on the floor. He was only thigh high. I wondered how tall he would be when I saw him next time.

He stood a few feet away from the queue and hurried me up. I walked towards the queue to go through the gate.

"Auntie, go, go, the airplane will fly off and won't wait for you." He raised his voice high and waved his hands to me. He looked like a small grown-up.

Mum, dad and brother stood at both his sides. I couldn't tell if they were smiling or anything else.

"Look after yourself," said mum and dad.

"Passport, please," the man of airport security looked deadpan.

I handed him my passport and turned my head. They were still there waving to me. I waved back and smiled, then turned my back to them.

The adventurous journey had started.

8th August 2004, 2PM UK time, outside the office of University Hall

Just arrived in the UK, and it was Father's Day today[1], damn it! I forgot to say 'Happy Father's Day' to dad when I left.

I stood outside the office waiting for a friend who had travelled together to register us in the accommodation. Someone spoke to me in English, it sounded like a question. I turned to look at her, a Chinese looking girl carried a massive suitcase, and I only remembered that I replied 'I don't know'.

The friend called out to me in Chinese, 'hey Martha, you have to register yourself.' I went upstairs and saw the girl. I heard her speaking in Chinese to my friend. I remained silent.

We finished the registration and made our way to our flat, and then found out that there were five people living in this flat, apart from the friend and I, the rest of them were one Taiwanese and two Chinese. No one spoke English. How on earth did this happen?

A Chinese speaking flat... Was I really in the UK? Thank god that I would only live here for five weeks.

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[1] 8th August is Father's Day in Taiwan.

28th September 2004, midnight, in my room in the student accommodation

The room was awfully quiet. The lamp in the courtyard shone through my only window in this tiny room. The light did not touch me at all, for I was in a state of wondering nowhere in my mind. It had been a hectic moving week. Back from my two week trip to Paris and Edinburgh, I had not settled, not just yet. Worst of all, I had lost the hearing all of a sudden in my right ear while I was in Edinburgh. I had no idea what was happening. I stared at the screen of my laptop, and clicked the button to play music. I could not hear any sounds or voices on my right side. To be precise, I could hear humming, but could not tell what these sounds were. Everything sounded like humming to me, especially voices in a closed room. What was wrong? Was I going to be deaf? Today was Teacher's Day in Taiwan. I could have had a happy party with my lovely students. Why the hell would I put myself in a miserable condition like this? A sudden wave of self-pity came over me. I could not help but start weeping.

Apart from my ear problem, I still had to tackle the office about my EdD[2] offer. I had been busy registering for the master course and meeting fellow students and tutor from it. In my mind, however, I was still waiting to hear the result of the EdD application which was sent in three weeks before. The autumn term had started,

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[2] Doctor of Education, a doctorate in Education programme in University of Bristol. I found the EdD course and sent the EdD application to the office before I registered with Master course, as I already had a master's degree and would like to start the doctoral course straightaway.

but where was my offer? I had to do something to speed things up and therefore sent an email to the administrator and the director of the EdD Programme.

It worked. A few days later, I was summoned.

6th October 2004, morning, in Jane's office

Jane was speaking so fast. I looked at her and tried to concentrate on what she said to me. Her voice still sounded humming to me. She asked me some questions concerning my study plan and why I wanted to study the EdD. I squared up to those questions, even though for most of the time, her words were not comprehensible, partly because of my ear problem[3], partly because of my poor competence in English. What had I answered? It was certainly not to be remembered, for I would say anything that could let me pass through. I lost my concentration as soon as I finished talking. Jane's mouth opened and closed, opened and closed, opened and closed... It looked to me like a dummy's jaw moving unbelievably fast. My mind wasn't with her, roaming off.

"You know doing PhD IS very lonely!" said Jane. My mind finally came back to this room.

"I know," I replied, but was wondering how lonely it could be.

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[3] I finally managed to see a doctor, two days later. I was unexpectedly dismissed from the doctor's room in five minutes. She said I had flu and there was a little water in my ear. She told me to steam my nose with hot water. What!? That was it? No tablets? No prescription? Disappointedly and acquiescently I went home and steamed my nose. Amazingly I heard the beautiful world in two days.

Jane looked at me and said, "Ok, you are mad. You got it!"

Yes, I was MAD, but I got the offer.

"The journey begins," I grinned in my mind's eye.

When I came to the UK to study in 2004, I did not want to be just an outsider like an international student, nor did I want to be a permanent immigrant. I had no idea how I could position myself properly in this situation. As an ordinary Taiwanese, or rather a naïve person, I could never have imagined that the journey in the UK would be a roller coaster. By sensing my change of inner self and external behaviour, I am intrigued by the process and also curious about how other Taiwanese cope with the huge contrast between two languages and cultures[4] in every aspect of our lives. This research project, therefore, emerged from those thoughts. Since I can sense my identity transformation compared to who I was, I assume that Taiwanese people who, like me, live in the UK will be aware of their identity transformations. I found that people who have different social roles live a different life and have different lived experience, which may result in a different way of assimilation into a new country. Although students are the majority of Taiwanese people living in the UK, our lives are too similar to make the spark of difference, I then decided to reach out to different groups of Taiwanese people in the UK, in order to expand my vision.

By involving more people in the research project, it felt to me that one-on-one interviews do not provide the opportunity for people to listen to each other. Gathering all of us together to do the research project then became the imperative, and collective biography (Crawford et al., 1992; Davies & Gannon, 2006; Haug, 1987; Speedy, 2008)

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[4] Here I take Geertz's concept as the working definition of culture: 'culture may be understood to be public, patterned and historically reproduced symbolic practices which are available for human meaning-making. Culture is public because such practices must be shared – there is no culture of one (Gone et al., 1999, p. 372)'. More detail will be explained in chapter yellow- culture and identity.

is an innovative way of doing group work that suits my idea. Not only does it provide an opportunity for participants to speak out, it also requires them to write in/up/out. Our writing is the main focus of this research, which is supplemented with our discussions during four workshops. Apart from our writing and discussion, the particularity of space, atmosphere and the environmental settings of four workshops broaden our perspectives on culture and language. Unfortunately, I have not collected as much of these writings as I expected owing to participants dropping out, either reluctantly or with free will. In order to complete this research project, I weave my own autoethnographic stories (Ellis, 1995; Ellis & Bochner, 2000; Holman-Jones, 2005) and our collective biography writing into this thesis. We comfortably wrote our stories from a first-person position, rather than the third-person position that Haug (1987) suggested. After reading through our writing, however, I found that the obvious commonality that our writings shared was hard to ignore. Thus, apart from retaining our individuality in this thesis, I also created a 's/he', instead of using 'we', to represent the collectivity of our group. One of the reasons is that 'we' just represents anyone without referring to any specific characteristics out of us and might be mixed up with the general pronoun 'we'. In our group, 's/he' foregrounds the particular factors out of the collective character and also keeps the imbalance of gender less influential. Since the members of our group live in different kinds of lives and take different roles in the society, it is not possible to mix them all up to form a collective character's stories. Therefore, I use 'singularity' to present their personal identity transformations respectively, especially in chapter red, diaspora and identity, and the first half of chapter green, language and identity, and use 'collectivity' to represent the

common element that we found from our writings, mainly in the second half of chapter green, language and identity, and chapter yellow, culture and identity. Besides, the interrelationship between different positions of 'I' comes into play throughout the text.

I am looking at how two grand factors, language and culture, have impacted on our diasporic identity. My intention in this thesis is that I want to make individual chapters read as independent chapters respectively, and at the same time to make all the chapters collectively read as a whole. Thus, I appropriate four primary colours[5] - red, yellow, green and blue, which can be mixed in any combination and also can be individually used in any occasion to represent each topic of this thesis. In chapter blue, I will explicate the methodology of collective biography, including other researchers' work in relation to it, and will depict the process of our four workshops for our group, including brief introduction of each member, their current situation and history in relation to the UK, and four different settings of our workshops. In chapter red – diaspora and identity, the explanation of diaspora and a self-portrait of Taiwanese diaspora will be given to help readers to get a picture of who we were/are. The following section will be the exploration of our individual personal transformations and my tentative findings. Onto chapter green – language and identity, in the aspect of language I leave out the linguistics and focus on the relation between language and confidence, and the impact of both on our identities. Since our names are part of our identities in relation to language, I will articulate how my names change over time and

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[5] In modern scientific colour theory (Sobel, 1989), a set of subtractive primary colours contains red, yellow and blue, and yet the primary colours used in the additive colour system are red, green and blue. Nowadays, red, yellow, blue and green are widely considered the four psychological primary colours (Kuehni, 2007).

on different occasions. Also, writing, an interesting factor that may impact on our thinking systems will be briefly addressed here. Chapter yellow – culture and identity, which is the grandest and the most complicated factor, will be oriented by the topics we had discussed in the workshops only, including food and embodiment, space, environment, music, greetings, value and attitude towards work, education and general situation. T he last chapter – black and white, allows me to reiterate my tentative findings in this study and to represent my own reflexive musing on the whole project and the outlook for cross-cultural methodology.

This is a participant-oriented narrative in which the flow of those workshops dominates the direction of this research writing. This research project was initially well-structured, but left a huge space, which allowed participants to shape it along with their wills and lived experiences. In addition, the inquiry into our diasporic identity transformation happened both during our workshops and in course of my writing for this thesis. Surprisingly, some of the results overturn my initial assumption. Language does not seem to have as a strong impact on our identities as I assumed. Our identity transformation does not appear to be a simple turning in our lives and turns out to be a continuous shifting where we cannot find the beginning and the end.

CHAPTER BLUE – COLLECTIVE BIOGRAPHY

Why collective biography (collective memory-work)?

What makes me choose this poststructuralist approach to conduct this project? In an era that is filled with diversity and uncertainty as well as unity and certainty, we seem to have much more variety and choices than ever in ways of understanding/ interpreting this world and its people. The diversity and the heterogeneity of post-modernity fascinates me and drags me into its world, but at the same time, it starts to disrupt my beliefs that have been formed in this seemingly non-simple world we inhabit. I have started to lose my indigenous knowledge of the world I used to dwell upon and also have lost the sense of what a new world *should* look like to me. I am searching for possible entry into this deconstructive world (Collins & Mayblin, 2000) and seeking a way of deconstructing indigenous knowledge, then reconstructing it. I shift, geographically, from Taiwan to the UK; linguistically, from Chinese to English; and ideologically, from positivist to postmodern ways of thinking. Without a doubt, I am in the process of deconstructing and reconstructing my beliefs and identity at the same time. This ambivalence stirs up my brain, my mind, and my body as a result. Predictably, it feels to me that the postmodern mind (Dickens & Fontana, 1994; St. Pierre, 2000; Tarnas, 1991) at the present, seems to be situated adjacent to my own mind which seems to be "messier" than ever (Belsey, 2002; Davies & Gannon, 2005, p. 369; Tarnas, 1991).

Abstract philosophical terms that appear in theories and methodologies are way too far from our daily lives and lived experiences. I am not saying that our daily lives outrank the methodology or the other way round, rather, I strongly believe that we

ought to make this intimidating element more user-friendly for people who are outside the academic world so that they can more readily accept and make use of it. Theories and methodologies, based on people's experiences and observations, are to help those who wish to grasp the meaning making of the significant episodes that happened in their daily lives, to make sense of themselves and their lives, to turn dim light into a meaningful moment, to stir up the existing doctrines and ideas of everything, to deconstruct taken-for-granted knowledge. As a researcher, I seem not to be able to escape from the tedious and yet must-do part of an academic thesis, since this is the linking part of the theory and our lived experiences. I will then turn our daily experiences (including all the human senses of taste, hearing, smell, sight, touch, and of course speaking and feeling) into the precious material of this research project by way of doing collective memory-work (Haug, 1987)/collective biography (Davies & Gannon, 2006).

This collective memory-work originated with Frigga Haug (1987) and a group of women in Germany collectively working on the subject of sexuality by means of telling their stories from memory. Haug suggests that this particular methodology uses their memory of daily experiences – the empirical element of their research – as the basis of knowledge to work themselves into the social structure, and also 'offers some insight into the ways in which individuals construct themselves into existing relations, thereby themselves reproducing a social formation' (1987, pp. 33-35). Crawford et al. (1992) became interested in the way that Frigga Haug et al. retrieved memories of their daily experiences of different subjects to study female sexualisation. They posit this as a successful method to work on gender and emotion because memory work offers the

opportunities with which to deconstruct the process of constructing emotions. Past events to a large extent construct identity and form future actions, but with this particular methodology, the written memories of past events transgress the boundaries of the past and the present and bring an understanding of individuality further into a social constructionist perspective (Crawford et al., 1992; Haug, 1987). Davies and Gannon (2006) coined the term 'Collective Biography' which juxtaposed two contradictory notions – the collective and the individual, thereby creating and highlighting the space in between. According to Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, "biography: the story of *a person*'s life written by someone else"; "collective: done or shared by *all members of a group of people*"; "memory: a thought of something that you *remember from the past*". Biography obviously signifies one's memory work, despite the fact that it can surely embrace the on-going stories of a person's life, which somehow become memory at a later time. Hence the contradictions of the phrase make the method itself explicit as well as mysterious. Gannon (2001) pointed out that "the oxymoronic implication of the phrase foregrounds the tension between the individual and the collective that is both the crux of the method and the source of its dilemmas" (p. 788). Davies and Gannon (2006) expanded Haug's method of weaving with collective memory to work on various topics and scrutinise power, agency, subject and subjectivity, in ways that had led Collective Biography towards an explicitly feminist poststructuralist method.

Collective memory-work collects research material – memories of people's experience – and, as such, is based on empirical elements of knowledge, whereas the analysing and theorising which Collective Biography espouses also engages with an

interpretive approach (Crawford et al., 1992). Collective memory-work amazingly brings empirical and hermeneutical epistemology together and mingles both of them seamlessly in one methodology. Collective memory-work is obviously a feminist project in which Haug and her fellow members traced their memories of relationships with bodies to reconstruct female socialisations and female sexualisation (Haug, 1987). They also inspected power, sexuality, subjectivity and the most ambiguous topic – memory (ibid). In doing so, Collective Biography has been extended from Haug's work by Davies and Gannon (Davies & Gannon, 2005, 2006; Gannon, 2004a), to include poststructuralist conceptualizations, bringing in concepts of language, discourse, power, agency, and subject to their group work.

The main point of this project is placed at the juxtaposition between different cultures and languages that have impact on people's identity as well as my identity. I will look at identities that only can be examined by people's own perceptions through discursive practice. People (un)consciously twist, falsify, forget, repress and reinterpret their accounts of subjective experiences that might give individuals a false identity. I am in fact concerned more with the way in which people ideologically construct their identities and grow themselves into the structure of society (Haug, 1987) than whether their subjective experiences produce 'real' identities or how researchers objectively validate their true/false accounts. Despite the fact that the lack of objective validity in subjective experience can cause a common argument, the subjective experience leads us to look for resistances, conflicts and contradictions that people might have left unacknowledged. I, too, look at the self-constructed identity that is formed not only through the meaning making of individual's lives, but also through social space.

Although previous researchers have taken up collective memory-work or collective biography to examine various aspects of sexualisation (Haug, 1987), of emotion (Crawford et al., 1992), of healthcare (Browne, 2003; Gannon, 2004b; Kamler, 1996), of gender and writing (Davies et al., 2005; Gannon, 1999, 2001), in school settings (Bansel et al., 2009; Connor et al., 2004; Gannon, 2004a; McCann, 2002; Walker, 1999), in higher education settings (Carteret, 2008; Claiborne et al., 2009; Davies, 2006; Davies et al., 1997; McCann, 2002), of feminist discourse (Davies et al., 2005; Davies et al., 2002) and others (Linnell et al., 2008), there are no published collective biographies to date specifically working on culture and language. Poststructuralism enables different visions of culture and language and, also, examines the knowledge that we take for granted (see Belsey, 2002). In addition, poststructuralism highlights language and discourse that both have constitutive force, and discursive and regulative practices (Davies & Gannon, 2005; Gannon, 2004a). So it seems that collective biography, which involves the telling and writing of memories and the subsequent analysis (Davies & Gannon, 2006), will be an appropriate practice within this particular milieu.

Collective memory-work was generated in Germany using the German language and subsequently broadened as the methodology of collective biography in Australia and the UK using the English language. In translating culture to another language, the meaning may be fully or partially got across, yet the spirit will almost certainly be partially lost by way of translation. The loss is made during the course of either the intrapersonal translation or the interpersonal translation. Since we, in contrast to an English theoretical context, conducted our workshops in the Chinese language,

this research project will be hugely influenced by similar losses. Nonetheless, I still intend to conduct this research because I am fascinated by the findings that might emerge from collective biography. It might lead to concord or discord amongst participants, and might turn our unique individual modes of appropriation of the social to the general modes of the appropriation of the social (Haug, 1987).

I want to collect people's stories/memories as well as mine without making any of these stand out alone. I want to do it in a way that no one has to be the constant focus in a group of people, which might possibly make them uncomfortable. I want people not only to speak of their memories, but also to write their memories out loud, because I find people may appear to be rather different when writing than when they are speaking. For instance, people might be more pungent when writing, more polite when speaking, or the other way around. I want to find out if the distinction between the way people write and speak affects how people perform writing and speaking (discussion) in a group. I also want people to experience the way they tell and write their stories that might surprise them into (maybe unknowingly) disrupting their rehearsed stories, taken-for-granted knowledge and clichés in their lives, and to excavate their embodiment as Taiwanese. Without a doubt, I am one of them. All the above will hopefully be achieved by means of doing 'collective biography' (Davies & Gannon, 2006).

Memory-work

The particular material I am going to use in the methodology of collective biography is memory. Memory is the most unreliable and slippery material for research,

but nonetheless, it is the major factor to construct our lives and identities (King, 2000). The most controversial problem of retrieving memory as the raw data in a research project is whether the memory is 'real' or not. People's memories, in many cases, are likely to be slightly or mostly different from the real events. The real events and real memories are not the matter we are concerned with in collective biography, because people believe what they remember to be true of the events, and reconstruct the past events through their memory. When they tell or write their memory, the event that their memory reconstructs becomes true to them, however inaccurate it might be (Crawford et al., 1992; Rosen, 1998). The fact of what their memories mean to them is what matters both to them and to me as the 'researcher'. The slippery and unreliable nature of memory does not have to devalue memory-work. Memory-work allows us to re-experience those events in the present (Davies & Gannon, 2006), 'the meanings of then become the meanings of now, the feelings of then become the feelings of now' (Rosen, 1998, p. 102), that is to say, memory is a continuous process (King, 2000) constructing the self through the discourse of deconstructing and reconstructing past events. It is not only the event itself, but also the emotions, feelings, meanings, beliefs, and reflections that emerged before, during or after the event playing an important role in the construction of self. The truth of the memory of events is the least of my concerns in my research project because it is not how accurate the events would be that interests me, but rather, how people make meanings out of their memories and into the social is the focus of my research. 'In a sense it is the very unreliability of memory that enables this close discursive work' (Davies & Gannon, 2006).

'Reflection is at the heart of memory-work. But although reflection is an individual process, in memory-work it is made public within the collective' (Crawford et al., 1992, p. 52). One's memory is not just individually constructed, but also socially constructed through reflection (Onyx & Small, 2001). Our collective biography workshops, to a degree, collect people's individual memories, thus we are not looking for collective events but collective elements from people's individual memories. 'The act of remembering actions, episodes and events from the past makes certain aspects of the process of identity-forming accessible' (Schratz-Hadwich, 1995, p. 42). In our memory-work, we are not talking about a national event that everybody remembers in common, nor a collective memory that a family or a group of people have in common (Halbwachs, 1992). We are seeking the commonality in our individual memories of living in a foreign culture and using a foreign language, which may change our individual identity. All my participants, in any case, do not have collective memories in common, as described by Hibachis (ibid), since they had not known each other before they congregated to commence the workshop. We, in common with other Taiwanese people, share our original culture, language, problems and difficulties, but our lived experiences vary according to our different roles in this society in the UK. We cannot but live out of the present social world even though we call up individual memories of our childhood (in our case, the first few years of our stay in the UK can be deemed as another period of childhood of our life in British culture[6]. I will explain more in the

[6] Although I am aware of it, I will not bring in the issue of the subtleties of four different nations, Scotland, England, Wales and North Ireland culture-wise. Even though I live in Bristol, south England, those British people who I have met are not just from England. Those cultural ideas that I have received so far are not confined to be English specific. (Christopher, 2006) Therefore, using 'the UK' and 'British culture' to refer to the country and the culture seems sensible to me in this study.

following section). On the one hand, this should not imply that our present selves are superior to our past selves (or the other way round), but rather that it provides an opportunity to draw us back to the past in order to see something never perceived before and to reappraise something we took for granted in our lives (Haug, 1987). This project is not just about 'how and what individuals remember and how they represent their memories, but also what might be termed a cultural struggle over the construction and meanings of memory within culture' (King, 2000, p. 5). In doing collective biography, I do not assume that our group could arrogantly represent the whole of Taiwanese culture and all the Taiwanese people. I hope to draw on our written memories to 'understand the process of selving rather than to discover particular details about the individual selves' (Davies & Gannon, 2006, p. 7). That is enough.

What Haug suggests for memory-work is to retrieve the first memory, generally, of early childhood, about the topic that the group chooses. I am not convinced that retrieving the 'first memory of early childhood' is the best or needs to be a compulsory way to 'gain from past feelings and connections some knowledge of the way we work ourselves into the social world (Haug, 1987, p. 71)'. Here, the focus is placed on past feelings rather than memory of early childhood. It seems to me that any significant memories from the past may also produce a past feeling, enable connections between the past and the present, and enable us to work ourselves into the social world. The use of early memory may be justified by Schratz-Hadwich (1995, p. 40), since 'for most people, memories, especially early memories, mark those options for the expansion and liberation of the self that we feel we have lost', but I am still not fully convinced. I agree that memory can offer all the above but what I question is whether this has to be

memories from our childhood. Schratz-Hadwich says 'the process will work better if participants write about one of their earliest memories rather than something recent'(1995, p. 45). The memory two or three years back from the time we held the first workshop, to some extent, was something recent. We, however, in our workshops, looked at how culture and language had affected our identities during the time we had lived in the UK. I assume that our memory of early childhood may not have many connections with British culture, in addition, the identity that was constructed during childhood may not stay the same up to the time we left our country. Thus, I decided, without consulting the group in the beginning, to write the first memory of the time we arrived in the UK to explore our identity transformation rather than exploring any childhood memories of cultural difference. In a sense, the memory of the time we just arrived in the UK can be seen as the 'first memory', because we had been learning 'as if' children, curious and eager to find out about our new British world.

Collective biography is a fairly new feminist poststructuralist methodology. Even though women do collective memory-work in a collective environment and write down their memories individually (nowadays not only do women choose to use this methodology, but also some men, (Bansel et al., 2009; Gale & Wyatt, 2008; Pease, 2000)), they are still autonomous individuals making decisions without coercion about how they are going to do the subsequent analysis – collectively or individually. There are some instances of solo writers who have given voice to the collective analysis/result for the group (Browne, 2003; Carteret, 2008; Davies, 2006; Gannon, 2004b). Although the solo writer should not be taken as the representative of the group, the final writer indeed (re)presents the work of the group and at the same time her/his

final writing gives us access to their work and a sense that the disruption of cliché is made possible by means of scrutinising each other's discourse within a group. In doing the practice of collective biography, taking other people's work as examples, group work can be represented as either singularity – a collection of each individual's named writing (pseudonym/real name) (Connor et al., 2004; Kamler, 1996; Linnell et al., 2008) or collectivity – a interwoven text of all (Bansel et al., 2009; Claiborne et al., 2009; Davies et al., 1997; Gannon, 2001, 2004a).

The works mentioned above were, apart from singularity and collectivity, all represented in different forms, such as art work, play script, poetry, opera, or theatre script. Are the words deemed less academic and more playful? I think not. Like Gannon (2004b, p. 67) says, "in a sense, all academic work is 'performative'... The writer performs herself as 'academic' and 'intellectual' by effectively taking up the appropriate discourses and textual conventions." The mono-style of writing in the academic arena has been disrupted. In fact, more and more non-traditional forms of academic writing are taking place. These alternative forms of representation, in a sense, are similar to the concept of 'performative writing' (Pelias, 2005), and yet at the same time, as Pelias emphasises, 'the work under these labels, although sharing many commonalties, cannot be reduced into a single logic' (p. 416). The concept of performative writing stands for these alternative representations in which it 'opens the doors to a place where the raw and the genuine find their articulation through form, through poetic expression, through art' (Pelias, 2005, p. 418). The genres that performative writing stands in for do not specifically include/foreground art work, art-based or multi-media representation, but both share some design features that might fill

the 'hairline fracture' in the academic foundation (Pelias, 2005). In a sense, these alternative representations (both writing and non-writing practice) present the embodied work of collective biography in ways that coincide with the concept of performative writing which 'welcomes the body into the mind's dwellings' (Pelias, 2005, p. 417). Here, I borrow parts of the concepts of performative writing to explicate the significance of the alternative representation in collective biography. I find alternative ways of writing (or non-writing) have the potential to bring readers to respond, too, in a different way to the writers successfully, thus one becomes connected to another as well as the community (or the world). Alternative representation is not the imperative, but an option that people might be able to find useful to turn their daily experience into a story that matters to them, and, also, to the community.

Dusting before we set off on our group work

Group size matters (Baron & Kerr, 2003b; Morgan, 1997). Apart from writing, group work is one of those particular features of collective biography practice – a small group may not evolve active and effective discussions, whereas a large group could cause data loss problems, for example, breaking into small conversations between people who sit next to each other, or the discussion may be led astray more easily. I tried to find some suggestions of group size from preceding researchers who have engaged in participative inquiry, for instance, co-operative inquiry (Heron, 1996; Heron & Reason, 2001; Reason, 1994). Heron aimed to create a new inquiry paradigm and highlighted the philosophical elements, such as the ontology, epistemology of four

different ways of knowing, methodology and axiology (Heron, 1981; Heron & Reason, 1997). The concept of co-operative inquiry is rather similar to that of collective biography in which the former does research 'with' people rather than 'on' or 'about' people and it hopes to create theory too. Unfortunately, neither of these inquiry methods makes any suggestion about group size. It seems not to be a concern of this specific inquiry, and yet I still have a concern about deciding the group size. I then shifted my search to the therapeutic group (Corey & Corey, 2002) and focus group (Morgan, 1997). Although Corey & Corey (2002) suggests eight people as the proper size of an adult group, Shaw (1976) takes Slater's suggestions of five people being the optimum group size, and Morgan (1997) suggests the size of useful groups to be a range of six to ten. They all recommend that researchers take the constraints of their situation, the purpose of the research (Morgan, 1997), group task and group composition (Shaw, 1976) into account.

Collective biography groups certainly differ from therapeutic groups and focus groups in terms of purpose, process and theoretical frameworks, but, nonetheless, intimacy is a shared characteristic amongst these three. Considering there is a rather small population of Taiwanese people in the UK, I decided upon four to six people (including me) as the ideal size of the group for a project that utilises an intimate methodology. If the group size had been smaller than four people, our discussion may have fallen into chitchat without us noticing because the group may have contained friends as participants. And yet if the group size had been larger than six people, either a resistance to building up sufficient intimacy may occur within the group (Davies &

Gannon, 2006) or the duration of time may not allow participants to get involved in deeper discussion and surveillance of their memories.

My initial intention at the very beginning of recruiting members of this group was to look for different Taiwanese people, including students, professionals and housewives, who I did not know in my 'real' life in order to add a diversity of roles to the group. By removing the constraints of gender and the limits of one occupation (students), I was hoping to cover as broad and diverse a range as Taiwanese people can produce for this study. I set a condition of the minimum stay in the UK for participants as two years because of my personal experience in which the first year of stay is normally preoccupied with trying to learn the language, and the second year is similarly preoccupied with getting to learn the culture[7]. In the first two years, everything was so novel that we just wanted to enjoy a different life here. It was not until, roughly, the third year that we started to be aware of our identity transformations. Another reason is that the population of Taiwanese immigrants in the UK is rather low, and the majority of Taiwanese people here are master's students who study with other international students and only stay for one year. International students' lived experiences may be less locally associated, but perhaps more internationally resourced in terms of cultural immersion, so that the condition of two-year stay will hopefully find participants with sufficient experiences of encountering British culture. To ensure that participants have more stories of identity transformation relevant to British culture and the English language than those of merely learning British culture (as well as

[7] Learning the language and the culture, to some extent, overlapped and it is hard to separate and distinguish both elements. Only if you get a grasp of the language, is there the access to acquiring the culture, especially when you live in the country where people speak the language.

international knowledge) and English, I set the limit on the minimum stay as two years in the UK for participants[8]. My assumption here was that the longer one lives in the culture, the more one may be aware of changes (or no changes).

The recruiting information was declared on my personal blog publicly (see appendix V), and disseminated through acquaintances. This method of recruitment resulted in finding three real-life friends who were interested in this study and three participants who came across the statements in my blog[9]. Including myself, there were seven people in total. Morgan (1997), too, suggests we over-recruit 20% of the designed number for the group. There were seven of us in the beginning, however, at the end, two participants did not attend our workshops physically, due to some difficulties, but did contribute a few email exchanges regarding the topic of our workshops.

The initial design of the group work was to hold either four one-day workshops so that we can just focus on the group work without disturbing our daily lives, or two two-day workshops, so that we might be able to get away from our daily routine, at the same time, in order to feel our bodies, to refresh our minds and to touch our souls. The difficulties of conducting a two-day workshop, however, arose immediately. The first

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[8] In fact, I had really wanted to make it three years but was afraid of not being able to find enough participants. With hindsight, we had all stayed for the minimum of three years by the time we eventually had all four workshops done

[9] There is an interesting phenomenon nowadays that numerous Taiwanese people who live abroad for study, work or love do not send off letters or emails to loved ones, but write blogs (or similar media) and upload photographs to keep their families and friends up to date with their daily stories or important incidents instead. The additional (dis)advantage is attracting strangers as well as people who are in the same situation to read their blogs and to get to know each other. This online issue, however, is at the edges of this study so that I only point out the unusual situation rather than excavate it more widely and deeply.

difficulty was the finance issue. I could not raise sufficient funds for conducting a two-day workshop that included the expenditure of accommodation, transport, and the venue, not to mention their unsalaried participation. The second problem was that we were all tied up with daily work, study, or even pregnancy. After consultation with all the participants, we determined to go for the option of one-day workshops. In the morning of the workshops, we gathered together to talk about our memories and stories, parted to write our stories, and then took a break to enjoy our own lunch and traditional Taiwanese savoury snacks that I made as an acknowledgement of their voluntary participation. After the lunch break, we came back to the group to read our writing out loud; discuss it with and make connections to each other, and then finally write again. We did not manage to discuss the second collection of writings generated in the afternoon session in each workshop as I had initially planned to, due to running out of time, each time for a variety of reasons. It was also agreed that I collect all the writings from the group, and that they were happy to let me keep not copied writing, but the original manuscripts.

The entire fairy-tale sounding story is not always true. Indeed, the time frame of four workshops was well-structured but flexible. In the first workshop, we had gone well through the introductory and getting-to-know-each-other session as I planned, but things had gone out of control in the afternoon. One participant's stories triggered another's and the discussion was brought out of the room to a broader vision. I was also intrigued by the discussion and lost my original plan. I still could not figure out why I did not remind people of the time or stop them. I was aware of the time limit, but, for the first time as a facilitator of a workshop, it seemed awkward for me to interrupt

people talking, especially when it was quite a heated and complex discussion. In addition, participants felt awkward about reading their own writing, so they chose to 'talk' about their writing. That is to say, there was much more written and unwritten information interwoven within our discussion. Even though my main data was going to be the writings from workshops, I do not see the writing being privileged over speaking in this case. Discussion was an essential element in this methodology, and therefore our discussions in the four workshops had been taped and digitally recorded. They are ready to be fed in throughout my thesis writing.

Who were we in this group?

Carina and I found each other in 2004 through the blogs that we both just started writing for our family and friends. We were both eager to meet new friends soon after we arrived in the UK; especially Carina, as she came to the UK with her then fiancé (now husband) and had made no new friends at that time. So, we met each other regularly (and still do whenever we can). She is a mother of a two-year-old and quit her job during the last phase of her pregnancy. During our workshops, she underwent pregnancy, birth-giving, and being a mother. She never missed a workshop.

Daniel Ho was a post-doctoral fellow in electronic engineering, but also a former PhD student at the University of Bristol. We were acquaintances for years and I do not remember how we met. He preceded me by dint of three years for his stay in the UK. He too fully participated in all four workshops.

May came to the UK with her husband in 2004 and worked in a factory to kill time while she was doing her master's degree during the course of our workshops. She

had been reading my blog for a while, whilst I had been reading hers, but we did not know each other until she approached me. She then saw the recruitment advertisement and expressed her interest in my research, because she was also doing a master's degree about culture and management. She joined the first workshop in person. For the second one, she was tied up with housing problems, but still tried to join our workshop via a computer video phone. For our third workshop, May and her husband had moved to the US due to her husband's work. She still wanted to make the effort to join us via telephone. Unfortunately she was not able to join us on that day because of the time difference and her housing problems. When she finally sorted out everything, the workshop had finished. Therefore May and I, after the workshop, just had a short conversation over the phone discussing the workshop. Since she has left the UK, the criteria of the workshop did not apply to her anymore. She was, however, still willing to discuss any issues through emails.

Cindy and I know each other through a friend we have in common, but funnily enough, she found the recruitment information on my blog and left a message to express her interest in my research. She had obtained a master's degree in 2004 in the UK and went back to Taiwan for two years, and then she came back to the UK with her boyfriend and was working during our workshops. She managed to participate in the first workshop and then, being busy with her work, examination and daily life, missed the other three workshops. But we did have some email exchanges about the themes we had discussed.

Both Josie and Nafisa, who I never met in person, seemed to approach me eagerly about my research via my blog in the very beginning. Josie happened to

encounter difficulties in her own master's study by the time we started the workshops, so in the end she decided to drop out. Nafisa lived in the north of England and was working while the workshops were being conducted, and later she went through hard times during her pregnancy and was not able to join us physically, nor could she have a virtual meeting via the internet with us. I had few email exchanges with both Josie and Nafisa about the topics this project was concerned with.

And I, the conductor of this project, am a full-time student doing part-time work with local schools and children, which gives me extra opportunities to learn more about the British culture and language. All the participants had not known each other until the workshops started.

Group process

One thing that Carina said to me during the third workshop (outside the official session) had been lingering in my mind. She said she felt relieved without May. In a sense, she thought that May was very eloquent and her speaking was full of something intelligent. She adored May when listening to her, but at the same time, felt insignificant within herself and had a sense of speaking non-sense. I was shocked hearing this. Self-evaluation through social comparison (Brown, 2000) happened in our group in some ways that I did not expect when I recruited non-students. I neglected, before the workshops took place, to consider the kinds of power relations and comparisons that might come into play in a group in which some participants were making intellectually high status claims for themselves and others were not. I recalled Carina's hesitation to talk about her memory/life experience in the first workshop and

her quietness towards May's 'terminological' speaking. Since May was not able to turn up for the second workshop, Carina seemed to feel more comfortable and able to talk freely without her. I could feel her awkwardness when we connected with May on the mobile phone. On the one hand, I needed to be sensitive to people's feelings, especially when I was a facilitator of this group. On the other hand, Carina and I were close friends so that she told me about anything significant to her after our workshops. This was an advantage in which I could gain deeper and broader data from this talking outside the official workshops, at the same time, this was, too, a disadvantage, in which the overlap of talking in public territory and personal territory had made it more difficult for me to know the boundaries between what I could and could not mention. In fact, I am unsure whether it is social comparison for Carina or just the pressure. She felt under pressure that May could give such a useful-sounding speech while she only shared her simple life experience (Carina's words). During the last two workshops, Carina felt more comfortable to engage in the discussion possibly because of the familiarity with my place, the intimacy built up between three of us (Carina, Daniel and I) over the workshops and the discussion between three of us felt like a daily conversation to her. She did not feel the pressure that she had to contribute professional or terminological speech. Moreover, a small size of group seemed to enable people to disclose more details than a big group.

In our first workshop, I intended to build up the relationship amongst all of us. This was not a key feature in either Haug's (1987) group or Davies and Gannon's (2006) collective biography group, because the members of the group are acquaintances with each other and at the same time all activists or scholars. Taking a

different route, Speedy's (2008) group, which was placed between the collective biography group and outsider witness group[10], was emerging from therapeutic commitments and shared experiences of a group of young men, who knew each other. Our group, apart from being Taiwanese, was socially diverse, had no knowledge of each other and had nothing in common. Therefore, instead of blowing them away by beginning the serious discussion straight away, taking some time to build up the connection and relationship amongst us would calm their nerves.

The power relation (Davies & Gannon, 2006) has emerged as soon as groups form, and it moves 'around and through groups, events, institutions and individuals' (Danaher et al., 2000, p. 73). In Haug's and Davies's groups, they examined the power relation socially and politically between females and males in their stories, but not within their groups (even though the members were aware of it). It seemed that in both groups the conductor represented the authorised discourse where the members made academic commitment to either work against it or along with it (or even in between). As Foucault thinks of power 'as a ubiquitous and ever-changing flow', it depends very much on how individuals, groups, and discourses 'negotiate, relate to and compete with one another' (ibid, p. 80). Evolving from therapeutic commitments of an outsider witness group, Speedy (2008) seemed to turn the conductor into the role of a facilitator and became silenced amongst those young men in the writing. Considering that my participants were making neither academic nor therapeutic commitment to our group, I then chose a gentle way of facilitating those workshops, in a sense shifting the focus of authorised discourse from the conductor to the participants (including me). Hearing

[10] Outsider witness group is one of those methods in Narrative therapy.

Carina's words about May made me realise that the power relation took place where 'power and knowledge are instrumentally related'. In our group, the power was less exercised in an 'authoritative - submissive' relation, but flowed between individuals who had 'varying degrees of access to knowledge' and 'various domains and hierarchies of valued knowledge' (Davies & Gannon, 2006, pp. 148-149). A big gap of accessing knowledge between individuals intensified the power relation in our group, but at the same time the power relation crumbled into different forms as soon as May left.

I am also intrigued by the group process. There were some incidents generated in a quite unexpected way in the course of our workshops. These drew my attention towards explorations of the characteristics of groups as if I was trying to 'measure' our group up against any of those theories. This thought got me trapped in the world of grouping for a while. I became crazy about group dynamics, group process, group action, and group theory (Baron & Kerr, 2003a; Benson, 1993; Boyd, 1991; Brown, 2000; Butler & Wintram, 1991; Corey & Corey, 2002; Douglas, 1983; Forsyth, 1990; Shaw, 1976). A while late, I put the manic energy aside and came to realise that there were no universal understandings of groups, as each group has its life and power. It is the people and the interrelations between them that develop the group dynamic/process /theory rather than group dynamic/process/theory leading the humans.

First of all, the group was by no means a therapeutic group, neither was it a group for social work at all. Despite the fact that we did not bring problems to consult others or to mend our lives, each member of this group, like the creative writing group Hartill (1998) conducted, benefited from the writing and discussion throughout the

workshops where 'an increase in self-esteem, self-confidence... and empowerment would be recognised' (p. 48). This designed-to-be-intimate writing group was initially a 'created' group (Douglas, 1983). As the workshops had gone by, our group had become a 'natural' friendship group. Even though the remaining three participants had been friends a long time, 'the sheer enjoyment of working with others in a supportive situation' (Hartill, 1998, p. 48) continually built up the intimacy between us and drew us even closer. All of which, accompanied by the collectively individual writing process, can have therapeutic value, not to mention that the group process which had been implicitly reflected in the stories of the four workshops, our writings, discussions, the relationship between us and the dynamics of this group, 'are powerful aspects and contributors to the therapeutic benefit of the writing' (Thompson, 2006, p. 29).

Secondly, one of the purposes of our group's work, I would consider, was to (collectively) collect our individual memories/stories (biography) by way of writing and discussion. We were to enquire into our respective identity transformation throughout our life time since we came to the UK. It is the writing within a collective biography group that most specifically differentiates our whole beings. We did not write a collective paper, rather, we, respectively, wrote our own memories into the social as well as the individual under a collective setting (time, place and space). Thus, telling and writing our memories of living abroad and the impact on us gave rise to a sharp contrast between the individuality and the collectivity in our group. Interrogating each other (in a mild way perhaps) is necessary within the group and also significantly supplemented our collective writings as well as my individual final writing here,

because what I keep in mind all the time is not only our writings but also the details that happened in our group, within or outside these workshops.

Finally, some group members were not able to participate physically in our workshops, so that the number of participants remained under the optimum group size. Even though I allocated time to everyone equally to avoid chitchat, I personally thought those questions we asked each other were not as broad and rich as they were in the first workshop. This may be the downside of a small group, even though Carina felt more comfortable to disclose her opinions to the group. As a facilitator, I could have intervened and brought this issue into the conversation whenever I thought it was appropriate, because fracture and discord between individuals make the collective work more fruitful. A serious and hard way of conducting the workshops may be preferable to the academics, but may be too taxing for my participants to cope with. My gentle facilitation, partly coming from my counselling background and partly my personality, in a sense, had the advantage of not only bringing out the unsaid and the not-yet-said into our writing and discussion, but also confronting fracture and discord between us in a gentle way that participants may feel more comfortable to tackle.

Reality, concerns and ethical awareness

Collective memory-work, a feminist poststructuralist method, had been originally devised by and applied to women (Haug, 1987), and those who developed this method into a new methodology, collective biography, have been working with it on various topics and domains within the scope of poststructuralist feminism. Regardless of the origin of this feminist methodology, there are, nowadays, a number

of researchers using collective biography on both men and women, including male participants and male co-researchers, even male researchers having an interest in this methodology (Bansel et al., 2009; Connor et al., 2004; Davies, 2000; Linnell et al., 2008; Speedy, 2005; Walker, 1999). I did not, for our group, have any expectation in terms of gender issues as this was never my focus in this project, although I'm still surprised by the only male member Daniel's participation. My first concern of the beginning of our workshops was whether his presence has any influence or brings any different element to our discussions and analyses during the workshops. This is rather an intimate research group in which we may explore our memories of embarrassing moments or uncomfortable moments and perhaps memories exclusive to women that he may have no experience of at all, or vice versa. Will he feel ruled-out? Will these memories be written or spoken about differently when you are very much aware of the opposite sex's presence in the same group? I think my concern about gender issues is because I am over-wary about the concerns of 'feminist' methodology. Speedy (2005) says, however, that the 'equation of 'feminist' with 'about women' has long since been disrupted', thus the issue of male participants taking part in a project within a feminist methodology is not a particular problem to take into account anymore. Rather, in this study, the discursive practice that may differentiate one's opinion from another makes a point here. Also, after all the worries, I have come to realise that my project is to look at identity transformation in which only the factors of culture and language are taken into consideration so that the gender issues may perhaps be the least points to be considered.

The second concern is that the members of this group are Taiwanese people who are neither in the social research field doing research nor seeking a career in academia. Our group is a mixed group that consists of some who have been in the higher education system in the UK, some who are still in the system and some who have never been and have no interest in doing research at all. The data we produced did not look like academic text, but more like the daily lived experience that we told each other. The possible diversity of discourse was the impetus that made me choose non-students to take part in the group. The works conducted by Kamler (1996) and Speedy (2005), respectively, were similar in that the former worked with a group of women who did not identify as academic or feminist talking about ageing and loss, and the latter worked with a group of young men who had considered suicide, never identifying themselves as academic, and were in strong opposition to researchers and counsellors. This has eased my self-doubt on the issue of non-academic members. Some members, however, had expressed their fears to me that, when other members explained their thoughts with a rather academic language and depth, it feels to them that their own speech was rather shallow and less useful. Funnily enough, when I used some academic terms in my explanations and introductions (in fact I tried to use as few academic terms as I could in these workshops), they did not feel uncomfortable. Perhaps, they anticipated me speaking like a researcher, as they acknowledged that this is *my* research project after all. In fact, I would not want to put my participants off this study by using 'poststructuralist feminist jargon', just as I had been intimidated by the professional poststructural feminist jargon when I got under way with my research project. I have been hoping to bring some of the more complicated concepts of

sociology into ordinary people's daily lives and make them available for the use of people who are outside the sociological field of higher education. There are numerous ways to improve the knowledge of this world and people, and collective biography is such a good method for this purpose. Some people may be satisfied with being just numbers and figures in papers written by professional researchers, but some people may want to inform the social world by their own voices and texts.

Even though collective biography provides a mechanism for bringing various individual discourses working differently into the social, I suspect that the terminology Haug (1987) and Davies & Gannon (2006) used, to some extent, might put people off this fascinating research method. The poststructural feminist discourse, of course, contains a certain degree of professional terminology, but I hope that the intimidating jargon can be translated to a friendly language for others. Therefore, ordinary people can gather together to talk about their memories and stories, not for healing themselves, this is by no means a therapeutic group (even though there may be therapeutic effect), but for investigating how people work between the individuality and into the social. I hope what we produce in the group can draw more thoughts out of people who have similar experiences and create more opportunities to let the world hear individuals. I cannot help, however, but wonder whether I will be able to achieve its goal and finish my thesis without using too much jargon. Am I too naïve about the whole idea? It is left for you, the reader, to decide.

The experience of living in British culture constitutes the existence of our group, unlike other collective biography groups, we trace our memory not all the way back to childhood, but only up to the time we came to live in this different land. The third

concern is about whether the memory we retrieve from two or three years ago was appropriate and valid. As I mentioned earlier, the focus of these workshops is the continuous identity transformation that started to happen at the time we came to the UK, rather than the mere cultural difference we have encountered here. Identity is fluid and changing from time to time or perhaps changing continuously all the time. In Haug's work, their basic premise was that 'anything and everything remembered constitutes a relevant trace – precisely because it is remembered – for the formation of identity. We therefore decoded the details of our stories as written signs of the relations within which identity is formed' (Haug, 1987, p. 50). My assumption here is that by the time we left Taiwan, our past experience, social activities and discursive practice had formed our then identity, and from the time we arrived in the UK, anything we have seen, any people we have met, any incidents we have been through and any food we have eaten have started to change us. Or perhaps, there will be a new identity generated. This is a completely empirical assumption that is only based on my personal experience and those stories told by friends. What intrigues me is whether there is a collective element during the period of our individual identity transformation. Since the identity is fluid and always changing, the memory of early childhood may bring our own cultural experience as well as language learning experience into the social, but may not bring out our latest identities by the time we left Taiwan. In that case, recent memory seems not a 'no-no' within the assumption of the project, but I will still be curious to know what are the upsides and the downsides our recent memory will bring out.

I left the choice for participants to decide whether they wanted to discuss and write in Chinese[11] (Mandarin) or English in our workshops. Their view on this was consonant with each other, to speak and write in our mother tongue – Chinese, in order to avoid the stammer in thoughts and words due to the lack of vocabulary that may result in an incomplete (re)presentation of our thoughts and feelings. To some degree, each of our Chinese writings in the course of our discussions is inevitably mixed up with a few English expressions. Hence we, a group of Taiwanese people who are neither English speakers nor professional social science researchers, are pioneering a western methodology - collective biography which was initiated in German, developed in English, and is now being employed in Chinese! When Haug brought this collective memory-work to Australia, it had become a cross-cultural methodology. Crawford et al. (1992) took the idea of collective memory-work working on their emotion and gender project, whereas Davies & Gannon (2006) broadened Haug's methodology to work on gender issues, school settings and higher education systems and turned it slightly into an oxymoronic term 'collective biography' in order to highlight its significance. Both Crawford et al. and Davies & Gannon's work were conducted in the environment of Australian culture and English language, and some other researchers in Australia and the UK have also used collective biography as a new methodology to work on their projects.

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[11] In China, Chinese people call the language they speak Mandarin, whereas in Taiwan, we call the language we speak Chinese. Both languages are similar but different, just like British English and American English. As for the written language, Chinese people use simplified Chinese and Taiwanese people use traditional Chinese. I will call my first language Chinese rather than Mandarin in this thesis.

Davies conducted a collective biography workshop with Japanese students in Australia. The Japanese participants, however, explored their own experience of body/landscape relations through the English language contrasting how they had been in Japan with how they were in Australia (Davies, 2000). Those Japanese students who spoke English as a second language had encountered language barrier difficulties with conveying the spirit of their culture. The collective biography group was conducted in English because of the cross-cultural circumstances. It is, to some extent, double-cross-culture. Kaori, one of her Japanese students (participants), said in her letter to Davies, 'it was very difficult to tell you my ideas in appropriate English...this session was very helpful to develop my English and also my behaviour as a Japanese person' (Davies, 2000, p. 108). Telling one's story or memory in the context of one's own culture in 'another' language seems foreign to the nature of story or memory itself. On the one hand, the meaning and the spirit of our culture may be missing in the process of telling indigenous memories in a foreign language; on the other hand, apart from living in a different culture, like Kaori said, the process of speaking our stories in English imperfectly might help us to be aware of the unconscious part of our Taiwanese selves and how identity may change. I believe that the space which is created in the gap between speaking and thinking enables people to reflect on themselves, and at the same time the said is rescued from the saying by writing it down. Unlike those Japanese students retrieving their memory of childhood in Japan and speaking/writing it in English, we retrieved our memory of living in the UK and spoke/wrote in Chinese. This setting hopefully will cause contradictions and conflicts which are not simply in

language, rather, are real contradictions and conflicts in our lives in a way sharpening our perception in language (Haug, 1987).

This methodology is being double cross-culturally used in terms of culture and language. Group work, in a sense, is an inclination from Western philosophy, even though, in our stereotypical mind, East-Asian people always gather together as a group. Group work is, however, barely an option for us in terms of work. (This might be my personal stereotype of Western culture and Eastern culture!) Bringing a new Western-invented methodology that is derived from western philosophy into a whole East-Asian group is an adventurous, bold, and tentative practice, not to mention the double translated information that participants received. I am wondering whether this specialized method works for us just as it works for western scholars, and whether we are able to produce some spectacular thoughts in the way that western scholars do to shine through my dark mind. Our workshops have finished, and, in the meantime, the others have left me alone to construct the collective voice and to contemplate what the consequences our writing can form into might possibly be. Whatever the result will be, our group has created a new outlook in using a methodology underpinned by Western philosophies with a group of Taiwanese people. This study has originated the application of collective biography to a Chinese speaking/writing group and has reviewed the cultural difference in the discussion and analysis of our writing. The multi-translation has occurred when we took the step of writing and speaking in Chinese. I translated English information[12] into Chinese to inform my participants, and then after group stage, I had to translate all our Chinese thinking, writing and speaking

[12] including instructions, theory and part of the philosophy of the methodology.

back into English in order for non-Chinese speakers to make sense of our work. I hope my analysis will not be 'lost in translation'.

Finally, before the journey begins, I will like to draw attention to the ethical awareness in this study. In the beginning of our workshops, I raised the issue regarding the anonymity, the ownership of our writings and the confidentiality within our group and encouraged them to raise any issues they concerned. We all agreed with the confidentiality, but did not discuss anything about anonymity until our last workshop. I then gave each member the consent form (see appendix II) to read and to sign on. At the end of every workshop, I asked for one photocopy of their writings, but everyone was happy to let me have their manuscript (hand writing). Perhaps, our writings were specific to my study only, and cannot be used elsewhere. Also, the writing itself, which was kind of summery of their talking, may mean less to them than the discussion we had in our workshops. Anonymity is an interesting issue in our group. It was not until last workshop that we had to choose pseudonyms for ourselves. To my surprise, despite the fact that they all signed the consent form, three of them wanted me to use their social English names, which are not their real Chinese names, but widely used in social occasions. The other one did not mind at all. None of them work in academia in social science, so that they do not worry about being recognised in the UK. I cannot help but wonder whether they feel less exposed under the disguise of English names in British culture. If I were doing this study in Chinese language in Taiwan, would they do the same way? In this case, the concept of anonymity is taken in different approach when crossing cultures and languages. Apart from the ethical awareness, this issue somehow links to 'name and identity', which will be explored more later on in chapter green.

However, we had not had any discussion about this issue because it occurred after our workshops finished.

The different settings in four workshops

When I first talked to Carina about my proposal, she was fascinated by it. In fact, she had been interested in my research since I began telling her my idea of doing research across cultures and about ourselves. Therefore, I found my first participant. After I posted the recruitment letter on my blog, Daniel, May, Cindy, Nafisa and Josie expressed their willingness to participate. Seven of us were ready to go. We could only hold workshops over weekends because all of us had to work during the week. Everyone seems to have more than one role in this society. Saturdays were our preference, but it was still not easy to assemble all on the same day. It turned out that the four workshops took place in four different settings. Four different numbers of people, places, and ways of participation. With all these variables, the four workshops were easy to distinguish from each other, and more stories of settings can be told.

The first workshop

For our first workshop in September 2007, there were five of us. While I was having difficulties in arranging a proper room for our workshop, Daniel came up with an idea that we can sneak into an unlocked conference room in his department on Saturdays. He knew that there would be less people in his department and no one would use the room at weekends. In desperation, I appreciated and accepted his offer. Without receiving official permission, I felt like a burglar. I was desperate to find a

place for the workshop within my extremely limited budget, and spared no attention to any official procedure to get a venue for us. In fact, the official booking of small conference rooms in the University on Saturdays costs money and did not meet our requirements. I planned to start our workshop at 9:30 in the morning, to finish at 4:30 in the afternoon, and would have liked a place with permission to have snacks (food is a very special element of Taiwanese culture that I will articulate more about later in chapter yellow). Small conference rooms in my department (Graduate School of Education) were only open until 3pm, and, likewise, those in the library did not allow any food inside the building[13]. Thus, I eventually compromised on the 'illegitimacy' of the venue.

On Friday, May travelled from a small village in northern England to Bristol the night before our first workshop. Since I found no grant for her travelling or accommodation expenses, I invited her to stay overnight at my place. Even though this was our first time meeting each other in person, we did not find it hard to start conversations. We talked nonstop, topic after topic. It felt like we were old friends who had not seen each other for a long time and were eager to fill in the gaps we had missed. May intentionally kept herself busy by working fulltime in a factory whilst writing her dissertation. She said that the busier she was, the more efficient she could be. May carried a computer and data with her at all times and worked on her dissertation whenever she could. Therefore, on that night, while I was making Taiwanese snacks for our workshop, she was there chatting, helping and working on her dissertation. We

[13] This has all changed now that a coffee shop is located in a designated area of the library building, but too late for my project.

informed each other and exchanged opinions about each other's research. It was a very inspirational night for both of us.

Next day, 8:30am on Saturday, May and I carried all the stuff on our backs and in our hands, including food, drinks, utensils, her small suitcase and all the stuff for our workshop, walking for thirty minutes to Daniel's department. I felt so sorry for May when we got to our gathering point, sweating and feeling sore on my shoulders and arms. At the same time, I appreciated her being so thoughtful that she never complained about the long 'heavy' walk. Arriving early without being able to do anything, we stood there chatting randomly. It was not long before I started to worry about whether Cindy would show up or not, but then I saw Cindy coming towards us. Oddly enough, I had always a strange feeling that she would never turn up, so I felt relieved and happy to see her. While I was introducing them to one another, a small purple Ford KA approached towards us slowly. Carina's husband drove her to meet with us because she was seven months pregnant by that time and had back pain when walking further than usual. Her bulky belly slowed her down and she could only just edge herself out of the car. Walking with both hands on the back of her waist to support her body, Carina looked like all other pregnant women. This scene looked so odd to me in a way that, in my mind, we were still young and single, but now she had gone one step forward already.

Daniel came to open the door and smuggled us all into his department. There was no sound of other footsteps heard but ours. It was truly quiet in the windowless hallway seemingly dark and cool with a high ceiling. There were many metal and wooden cabinets stacked up on both sides of the hallway that we could not even see the

wall behind them. The sound of our footsteps echoing throughout the building sounded terrifying, therefore we all, except for Daniel, unconsciously lowered our voice as if we were exploring a haunted house. Daniel did not seem to notice the sound and introduced this building to us with excitement. After a few turnings in the hallway, we got to where the conference room was. To my amazement, the conference room looked like a great hall of medieval time. Right in the middle of the room, there was a huge historical wooden table surrounded by the same type of chairs. What a touch of medieval England! A long thin table of modern style, which seemed the odd one in this room, standing by the wall next to the door looked like a perfect place for our snacks. I put all the food on the modern table, and then joined others to admire this room. We were all stunned by the historically English flavour of this room setting, and yet struggled with how we could arrange our seats properly around such a massive table. We had no choices, but all squeezed at one end of the table feeling far away from each other still. Without being told of the detail of the venue, I was expecting a normal, modern, and medium-sized meeting room. This unexpected great hall with such a British ambience made a huge contrast as well as a connection to our workshop.

The second workshop

Following that first workshop, the second took place in March 2008, seven months later. This gap was caused by my literally nomadic life and participants' hectic schedules towards the end of 2007. Carina had given birth to her son in November and had been busy looking after the baby and herself afterwards. May and Cindy went, on their own schedules, travelling; Nafisa had a difficult pregnancy; Josie retook her failed

test and Daniel went back to Taiwan for a holiday. The research project seemed to cease for a long while, until I made plans to bring us together again, at which point so much time had passed that I felt I had to check on their willingness and availability to participate once again. They were still all willing to help, but some also had expressed that, for them, email exchanges were easier than physical participation. We finally found a time for, not everyone, but those who were passionate and able to participate physically in this research project.

Having been told of my difficulties of finding a proper place for my workshops, Jane Speedy, my supervisor, helped me book a meeting room in our department. The only condition was that we had to vacate the building before three o'clock in the afternoon. Therefore we started earlier, and shortened the lunch break in order to fit into the time setting. Once again, I carried all the stuff like a backpacker, but all on my own this time. We had permission to use the room, but I sneaked all the food into a room that allowed no food. I was waiting outside our department feeling excited about the Taiwanese food I had made. A familiar purple car moved up the hill, Carina was coming with her husband and baby. After sending a brief greeting to the couple, I walked to the back of the car to see her baby. He half lay in the car seat and waved his arms purposelessly – his eyes wide open and blinking like a doll. I was not sure if he saw me or not, but I waved 'hi' and 'goodbye' to him. Daniel was walking up the hill towards us while Carina and I watched her husband driving off with baby. Everything was nearly ready. And this time it was a predictable modern medium-sized conference room.

I placed a mixture of Taiwanese snacks I made and other nibbles on the table at the other side of the room. We started our workshop right away. I was indeed a little excited about how they may react to the food I made, but at the same time was worried about the slightly unsuccessful product. To my disappointment, they ate it, but did not pay much attention to the food during our break. For whatever reasons, I knew I had failed to bring any home essence to them through food. I could not change this now. Apart from the food disappointment, our virtual meeting with May had gone wrong too. High internet usage on Saturdays hindered us from having a virtual web-meeting with May. Thus, without any other options, we talked to her on the mobile phone using the loudspeaker. The whole situation was a little disappointing, but we had to settle for the outcome in the end.

The third workshop

Since May was preparing, due to her husband's job, to move to the US soon after the second workshop, she was not able to take part physically in our workshops anymore. It would also be hard for her to take part in the whole workshop via the internet because of the different time zones. It seemed that Carina and Daniel were the only two who could commit to this research project, therefore I considered holding our workshops in my own room. My massive bedroom had a big tea table, a cosy settee and a few chairs, which could be a great size for the three of us. I was also thinking about whether the presence of bedroom furniture would detract from the gravitas of research, however, the spaciousness made the sense of existence of bedroom furniture less intrusive than it might have been. Having the workshop in my room, I would not

feel limited about making participants feel at home. This meant that I did not have to be a backpacker again. With all these advantages, I decided to hold the remaining workshops in my room. While everything looked well planned and well organised, something less important went wrong. There is a common saying that anything that can possibly go wrong does go wrong. The water supply in my flat had been turned off all day on that Saturday because our new neighbour in the same building was having work carried out. Fortunately, we were not, psychologically, affected much by the inconvenience. At the end of the third workshop, May only managed to have a phone call with me for a summary.

The fourth workshop

Our last workshop was very much like the third one and included the same people, same place, and same settings. Unlike waiting outdoors, where I could observe participants (when they turned up), the environment and the interrelations, I sat in my own familiar space waiting and feeling something missing. Something about the observation of connection amongst participants, friends, buildings, environment, weather and me that had been part of the process of grouping was missing. The familiarity, the mundane, and the taken-for-granted had slipped into my whole being without an immediate awareness. Also, I came to realise that having a workshop in my personal space with participants who had been friends doubly troubled the border between the private and the public in terms of place and interpersonal relationship. Having a workshop (in a sense, it is a public-ish activity) in my private space with people I have known was more like having a social gathering with friends. I had to be

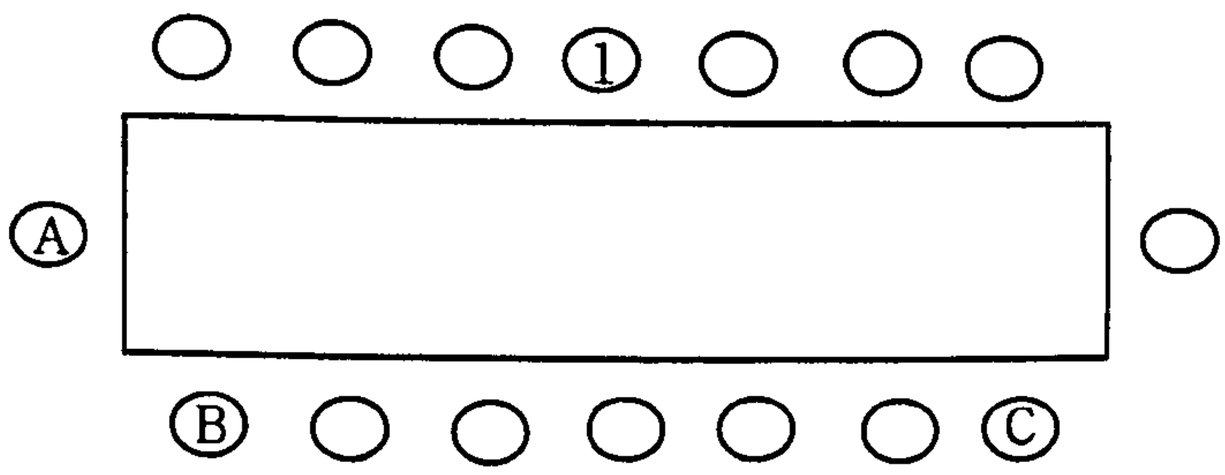
cautious about the demarcation between our casual chat and formal discussion, because the memories we were talking about were deeply involved in our daily lives. We would not, however, know each other if we had not all come to live in the UK. In other words, the existence of our friendship was built around the themes that my research project was exploring. Thus, the discussion in our workshop, to some extent, inevitably overlapped our daily conversations. Moreover, not only could friendship expand and deepen our research discussion (Tillmann-Healy, 2003), but, with hindsight, it was also friendship that made Carina and Daniel committed to my research project.

Space, time and fracture

Time is one of the significant factors that affect what we can produce in our workshops. Intensive one-week workshops may be appropriate for Davies' collective biography group, because they could bring their mind back to work intensively on their early memories. Even though we were forcibly doing workshops stretching over a long period of time, it just seemed right for us to work on our recent memories, which were highly related to our ongoing lives. The longer we live in a different country, the more we can sense the difference and can be aware of our personal changes, even identity transformation. This long time setting offered an extra opportunity to make our stories more fruitful and to reflect on our lived experience in relation to cultural difference and language struggles. In this sense, the time setting was not a disadvantage, rather, it seemed to give us an advantage over other groups.

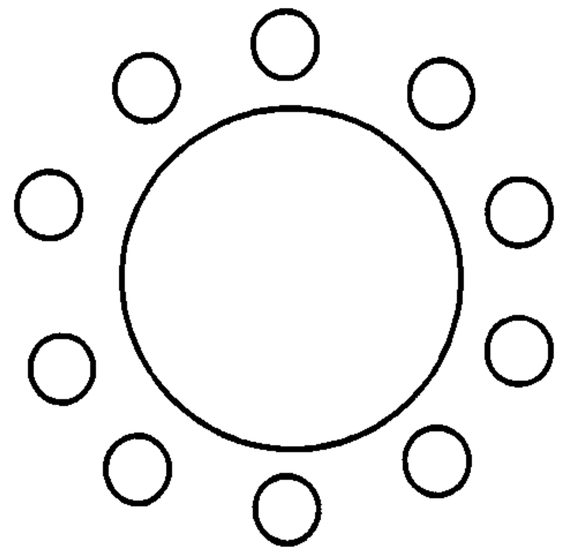
If these stories of workshops had not been put into words, I would not find that space seemed to play a significant role throughout our four workshops. Space may not

have a strong connection with our identities during these workshops, but the place and a sense of place (Rose, 1995) arose my interest in exploring how the presentation of a room can divert our conversation and my own reflection. First of all, as May called attention to the layout in our meeting room in the first workshop, the seating arrangement caused discomfort immediately. Our discomfort at the seating arrangement, however, did not diminish our admiration for the sense of the medieval Englishness in this room.



歐美的會議室
都是一張長桌
很討厭用這種會議桌開會
常常搞不清楚“大位”在哪裡
誰又有資格坐在大位
要不小心坐在角落
看不到坐在另一個角落的人
人家發言時沒看著人家
好像不太禮貌
在這間會議室
1好像是大位
可是有些地方
A才是大位

In a conference room in Western world
there is always a long table
I hate to have a meeting on a long table
I never know which seat is the leading seat
Who can sit in the leading seat
If I sit at the corner (B)
I wouldn't be able to see people at the other corner (C)
It is impolite not to look at them
When they speak
In this room
(1) seems to be the leading seat
But at some places
(A) is the leading seat



還是喜歡中式的飯桌
當然有“大小位”之分
可是感覺階級地位區別沒這麼大
非常容易看到在座的每一個人

I like the Chinese dining table better
of course there is a leading seat
but it feels insignificantly ranked
it's easy to see everyone on the table

The room of course was not built in the medieval era, but, for people who obtain the cultural knowledge from the media, those tables, armchairs, windows and high ceiling suggest a strong sense of Englishness. As Rose suggests 'the same location may be interpreted through different senses of place' (1995, p. 97). In the eyes of British people, we may have wrongly (or just differently) interpreted the sense of the medieval era, but the feeling of Englishness, wherever the impression came from, must be understood in terms of its social context. 'Such feelings are not only individual but also social' (Rose, 1995, p. 89). Senses of place may invite identification with a place and interconnection with others, objects, and places, and can create a variety of social space where people may identify or contrast with the place. In our case, a sense of place which contrasted to our own culture stimulated our conversation about the table and its related concept (see above writing). In addition, senses of place also 'work to establish differences between one group of people and another' (Rose, 1995, p. 116). Speaking about our Taiwanese spirit (in the UK) and the cross-cultural encounter in a

room full of a sense of Englishness enlarges the differences between two cultures and the social space between people and places. The created space enables us to step into the liminality (Speedy, 2008) in order to keep the space constantly open and look into the matters we take for granted.

Space exists not only between different cultures, but also between the public and the private. For the last two workshops, the usage of my personal room, as a venue for a non-personal activity, blurs the boundary between my academic life and private life. This may not induce an issue for other participants, but for me, 'the crossing of cultural, geographical and personal boundaries brings about complexity of vision and a sense of permeability and contingency' (Massey & Jess, 1995, p. 234) on the one hand, and psychologically threw me into disarray on the other. We are researching into our social lives as well as personal lives, and using our daily conversations and experiences as our research data. Two participants who took part in the last two workshops are friends of mine and had come to my place for social activities before. There should not be anything strange or unfamiliar to me in this sense. Why on earth did I feel so uncomfortable to have workshops in my place? 'Space... is a product of relations-between, relations which are necessarily embedded material practices which have to be carried out, it is always in the process of being made... we could imagine space as a simultaneity of stories-so-far' (Massey, 2005, p. 9). The relations between my private room which had been used as a venue for our social activities and people who I hang around with had created the space where I construct part of my identity through my private life. This space had worked as simultaneity of stories-so-far before the workshops took place. Once my academic life permeates through my personal life

(whether it involves familiar friends or not), stories will be re-written, and the space will be re-formed/re-shaped/re-constituted too. Space is 'never finished; never closed' (Massey, 2005, p. 9). So, too, identity.

CHAPTER RED – DIASPORA & IDENTITY

Summer, 2005, a museum in Oxford

I was about to push the door of another exhibition room open and saw a mother with two little girls was going to push the two-way door. I looked at the mother and then lowered my eyes to the two girls and found one of them fixing me with a curious stare. The door was pushed open, I smiled at them and stepped back to let them through.

'Are you Chinese?' The little girl suddenly asked me in a sweet voice, with a big smile on her face. Her mum seemed uncomfortable and was going to stop her.

'Eerrr… yes and no.' with a lot of questions in my mind, I could not, within one second, give the little girl a simple answer that would satisfy me.

She looked at me in bewilderment. We both carried on our way without stopping for any further conversations, not even for my confusing answer.

Taiwanese or Chinese?

Since we (the group) are going to inspect our respective identity transformations from the time we arrived in the UK up until the present, I will have to find a starting point. We all originally come from Taiwan, and, now, all live away from our family, friends, and our homeland. In a tentative sense, I call us Taiwanese Diaspora.

Taiwanese Diaspora, a double ambiguous term, is hardly recognized. The little girl's question elicited my personal confusion about my identity. Firstly, I feel uncertain whether to put Taiwanese or Chinese. This is a complex decision to make in terms of personal, national, political and cultural settings. There is never a simple solution or an easy trajectory for making the decision. Are we bound to *accept* either of them or do we *choose* between Taiwanese and Chinese depending on our own will. 'Becoming Taiwanese' (Wu, 2007) is not only a process of identification for us, but also an inter-personal, inter-cultural and inter-political ambivalence between Taiwan and China. I have no intention of going any further within this cultural and political issue to confuse my readers, but nonetheless, I will have to elucidate my personal and, maybe to some extent, arbitrary view on the process of 'becoming Taiwanese', since I studied abroad.

I am from Taiwan, speaking Chinese (Mandarin) and Taiwanese[14], writing traditional Chinese, and am 'ethnically' Chinese. We studied Chinese history and used to call ourselves Chinese, throughout school life. The textbooks of domestic history, in my memory, twenty years ago, were all Chinese history with Taiwan involved in some events only. We were banned from speaking Taiwanese in schools. The Taiwanese government of those times still wanted to claim Mainland China back. There has been a tangled and intricate political relationship between China and Taiwan. Not until the last ten years does domestic Taiwanese history (it is called local education rather than Taiwanese history) start to appear in school textbooks. I, as a middle-aged Taiwanese who is rather ignorant of Taiwanese history, have a deep relationship with the concept

[14] Taiwanese is one of many dialects, with no written language, in Taiwan.

of China. Taiwan, however, has been developing too fast over the last twenty years and has drifted away from the concept of Big China[15], as have the Taiwanese people.

Anything about China that I knew of, before I came to the UK, was from the history textbook and the media. I thought I had a fair acquaintance with Chinese people in the sense that we share part of the Chinese culture and I had learned a long period of Chinese history preceding the separation of Mainland China and Taiwan. Unfortunately, my thinking was naïve. The more mainland Chinese people I met, the stronger my resistance to being called Chinese. I, then, came to realize that I had missed the most important period of history, the last fifty years of Chinese history, wherein we have grown up speaking different languages (dialects), within different cultures and as geographically different nations. We have lived different lives and been taught different manners. In a sense, I cannot make any connections with China or Chinese people, apart from the language and the shared history (even though the Chinese and Taiwanese versions are from entirely different perspectives). I have not seen myself as Chinese but rather as Taiwanese since this realisation.

Most of the knowledge about 'Taiwanese diaspora' in this chapter could only be accessed by my own autoethnography (Ellis, 1995; Ellis & Bochner, 2000; Speedy, 2008) because our group did not position ourselves on the diasporic map in the workshops. Since they participated in my study to explore their identity transformation rather than to claim the political state of Taiwanese diaspora, it then created the space

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[15] We used to be taught the concept of Big China that all the Chinese people in the world, especially people from China, Taiwan and Mongolia, (but not Hong Kong, the colonial land of the UK) and the Chinese Diaspora all over the world belong to one nation, China.

for my autoethnography. Here, the relationship between autoethnography and collective biography came most into play.

This is my own understanding of being Taiwanese and ambivalence about my becoming. Once I put this word down, my identification with becoming Taiwanese means that I represent us as 'Taiwanese' in my thesis. Nevertheless, our focus in those workshops was about personal change during the stay in the UK not about whether we were 'Taiwanese' or not. We all had different life circumstances. Carina, Cindy and Nafisa, leaving their original family in Taiwan, are settling down in the UK with their partners/husbands/children. They will develop their nuclear family and will have their partners/husbands' family as their extended family in the UK. May is not going to settle in the UK, but moving to different countries every now and then, with her husband. Daniel, leaving his family behind in Taiwan, wants to settle in the UK with his Taiwanese wife, despite the fact that the newly-weds have not yet had the legal statement of permanent residence. I, more or less a drifting person, do not know where my next stop is. I do not think of returning to Taiwan soon after I finished my study, nor am I certain about staying in the UK for the rest of my life. With all our different circumstances, are we really eligible for the term 'Diaspora'?

Are we diaspora?

'Diaspora', a term flourishing in the last two decades, is a complex and contested term changing over time, especially in the era of post-modernity and post-colonialism. Diaspora has been broadly used for different races and people in different nations and lands within different circumstances and reasons, such as the Jewish,

Black/African, Chinese and South Asian Diaspora and so on. The term originally described the Jewish predicament of being forcibly moved from one place to another and experiencing a longing for a mythical homeland and also becoming assimilated and integrated into a variety of cultures (Ages, 1973; Ang, 2001; Clifford, 1997; Dufoix, 2003; Kalra et al., 2005; Myerhoff, 1978). Following that, it was adopted by African Americans to describe their post-slavery experiences, again forcibly moved from one side of the globe to the other (Clifford, 1997; Dufoix, 2003; Hall, 1990; Kalra et al., 2005; Matsuoka & Sorenson, 2001). The term Chinese Diaspora and South Asian Diaspora describe a forced relocation to a safer or better place. Nonetheless, the effort that a people have to make to assimilate and to integrate into different cultures (or maybe to choose not to) is never less than the other (Ang, 2001; Clifford, 1997). Immigrants, refugees, and other overseas communities, have to concern themselves with assimilation[16] and integration[17] into different cultures, so what are the differences between all of these terms?

Each of my group members is in a different circumstance – some are settling in the UK with the support from their partner's family, some are having no bonds with anything in the UK and some are still uncertain about their final destination. I cannot

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[16] Although Faist (2003) demonstrates three different models of assimilation, personally from my beginning phase of diaspora, I choose the new model as the working definition of assimilation, which starts from 'the assumption that minorities of immigrants do not necessarily amalgamate with the dominant core. Rather, different cultures converge under the umbrella of a binding constitution and a common language. This 'thin' constitutional-cultural frame allow for a rather 'thick' ethnic and religious cultural life of immigrants' (p. 213). In terms of immigrant and diaspora, taking newer approaches on assimilation, 'we could speak of temporary adaptation, i.e. a certain orientation towards the behavioural norms of the immigration country (Faist, 2003, p. 212)'.

[17] Under the definition of assimilation, integration is used as a general term to explain it, and changes from the old version - 'amalgamation with the majority society', to the new version - 'convergence of immigrant and majority groups' (Faist, 2003, p. 210). The spheres of integration include economic, political and cultural aspects.

decide a term on behalf of the whole group, but I will have to illustrate how I choose the term for my own displacement. I do not belong to immigrant communities in the sense of long term settlement, nor am I a refugee for sure. Temporary immigrant sounds tentative as if I am always ready to move on to the next stop, even though I do not know where/what it will be. I, then, incline to the view that there might be an analogy between other members' displacement and mine and that we can discreetly find a position for each of us under the umbrella of 'Diaspora'. I hesitate to use the term diaspora to describe the experience of Taiwanese people in the UK who neither are moved by force nor see themselves as immigrants or refugees. Clifford, quoting Tölölian, commented 'the term (Diaspora) that once described Jewish, Greek, and Armenian dispersion now shares meanings with a larger semantic domain that includes words like immigrant, expatriate, refugee, guest-worker, exile community, overseas community, ethnic community' (Clifford, 1997, p. 245). Similarly, if we take diaspora as a process, like Kalra et al. suggest, then 'we are not considering specific groups of people, but more general ideas that may be applied across a range of groups' (2005, p. 29). Since the meaning of the term has been broadened to a wider perspective, it will not be inappropriate to classify us into this category.

None of our group members intended to immigrate to the UK or to stay in the UK forever during our first visit. We all returned to or continued our stay in the UK for different reasons. Carina, Cindy and Nafisa came back for love. Dan chose to work here. May has been moving around all over the world, while staying in the UK the longest, with no choices, even though her husband was born Irish, settled in the UK. As for me, I have uncertainty about where I will settle down in the future, and therefore

every step I take now is not the final decision. Can we call ourselves diasporas for our first short stay? 'Diaspora implies a relationship between more than one society, one culture, one group of people' (Kalra et al., 2005, p. 17). If people intend not to connect with the other culture, society, and people, then neither the relationship will exist, nor will they deem themselves diasporas. Our writing below shows that how much less, during our first short stay, we care about the culture and the language difficulties that might (not) make a huge impact on our stay and our personal/cultural/national identities.

First short stay

第一次來英國
本來我的英文 OK
怎麼突然聽不懂
大家在說什麼
聽得懂 Nottingham 的英文
聽不懂 Bristol 的英文
沒有很大的衝擊
頂多
少講話

剛來英國讀書時
想法很簡單
通過學業
努力旅行
認識朋友
時間到了
收拾行李
回台灣
當時的煩惱
就是學業問題
身邊有好朋友相伴
學業上雖悶

First short stay

My English was ok.
But when I first came to the UK,
suddenly I didn't understand
what people were speaking.
I understood the English in
Nottingham,
but not the English in Bristol.
There was not much impact on me by
then,
I just chose to
talk less.

When I came here to study
my thought was simple
obtaining the degree
travelling more
getting to know more friends
When time is up
packing up
going back to Taiwan.
The only worry I had then
was the difficulty of study.
Even though there were some
difficulties,
I had friends around

硬著頭皮
花更多時間準備
並沒有受到太大的挫折

求學時
以爲自己
在完成學業後
會離開這國家
生活重點
只有研究
沒想花時間
看電視，Drama, new, etc
這卻是
跟英國同事之間
除了研究課題外
有進一步互動
的話題

I spent more time to prepare
and studied harder
I wasn't that frustrated,
not much.
During my study,
I thought I would
leave this country
after finishing study.
My life included
only research.
Never thought of spending time
watching TV, dramas or news,
but these are
the topics I can share
with English colleagues,
apart from those research topics.

Carina found that, during her first stay in the UK, British English, which is very much different from the English we have learned in Taiwan, was difficult to understand, even though her husband speaks British English. Her husband was originally from Nottingham and studied at a university in Bristol. While she came to visit his country and family, she stayed in two different cities and found she was more familiar with the English in Nottingham than in Bristol. It caused her some problems when talking to other people, but she just chose to talk less and did not care much. At that time she saw herself as only a tourist. Cindy came to the UK to study her Master's degree for one year only, her main concern was study. She chose to deal with her study problems on her own by spending more time and studying harder, and surely her feelings of tribulation over the study was soothed away in company with friends. Her frustration did not arise out of any adaptation to British culture or language. Instead, it came from her dissatisfaction with the study process in relation to language; the skills

of writing and reading could be significant factors in determining her study outcome. With hindsight, however, the frustration during her one year study seemed not a major identity concern. She was going back to Taiwan afterwards. The one year study was like a one-year trip abroad, as she wrote, 'travelling more, making more friends, when the time is up, going back to Taiwan'. Like Cindy, Daniel also thought he was going back to Taiwan after obtaining his doctorate, so that he spent all his time in the laboratory and the office. Even though he was aware that watching TV, dramas and news would gain access to making conversation with his English colleagues, over all six years of his study, he still did not intend to do so.

In Carina and Cindy's writings, it becomes apparent that the level of obstacles experienced in the UK was lessened by the thought of their return to Taiwan. I am not sure whether it was because they did feel less difficulty living in the UK when they stayed for a short time with the thought of returning to Taiwan in mind, or because they could not remember how difficult the situation had been. The significant factor is that they deemed themselves, during their first stays, visitors or guests with no obligation or strong will to integrate into the British culture. Later, we will find more 'diaspora' thoughts in their writings. Daniel continued, unlike Carina's and Cindy's return to the UK, living in the UK at the end of his six-year study. It was not the length of stay, but their state of mind making them change the way they lived whilst considering residing in the UK permanently.

Taiwanese diaspora

I deem us *Taiwanese* Diaspora rather than Chinese Diaspora. Ang (2001, p. 38) says 'Chineseness is not a category with a fixed content – be it racial, cultural or geographical – but operates as an open and indeterminate signifier whose meanings are constantly renegotiated and rearticulated in different sections of the Chinese diaspora'. I agree and understand. However, I still feel resistance to the term 'Chinese diaspora'. This term somehow connotes the geographical or symbolic homeland - Mainland China. It is not that I deny the ties with China; rather, it just simply signifies that the homeland we can/will return to is Taiwan. I am aware that I choose 'Taiwanese Diaspora' as our 'title' in accordance with my personal state of drifting life, but also take other members' different drifting lives into consideration. I start to delve into the literature of Taiwanese Diaspora looking into personal identity shifts rather than national. Han's paper (2008) explores the transnational identity of Taiwanese Diaspora in contemporary Japan who had colonized Taiwan by end of WWII for fifty years. She finds that 'Taiwanese migrants keep transnational ties to their homeland, Taiwan, while actively practicing a blend of Japanese and Chinese cultures' (p. 123). This explains how Taiwanese migrants are distinct from the Chinese community abroad in a subtle way, and yet personal identity transformation is outside the parameters of that study. I change the direction to look into the literature regarding Taiwanese immigrants in terms of identity transformation or diasporic identity. Most references regarding Taiwanese immigrants are from quantitative studies in relation to a variety of topics. This may demonstrate the demographic changes and the generic characteristics of

Taiwanese immigrants, but the depth of people's stories and the catch behind those figures are missing.

第二次來英國	The second time I came to the UK
是來定居的	is to settle down
語言對我來說	language is very important
就很重要	for me.
總不能一輩子	I couldn't refuse to
都不跟別人溝通	communicate with people forever.
打開電視的 subtitle	I switched on subtitles on telly
學當地人的英文	to learn local English,
希望能盡快	and hoped to be able to communicate
可以與當地人溝通	with the locals
	as soon as possible.

'Diaspora can denote ideas about belonging, about place and about the way in which people live their lives (Kalra et al., 2005, p. 29)'. While Carina and Cindy came back to the UK once again to settle down, diasporic consciousness had started to be constituted both negatively and positively (Clifford, 1997, p. 256). Carina realized, unlike her first 'touristic' stay, that language provided access to the local community and the host culture. She then chose to learn local English from television because she claimed she was a shy person. Nonetheless, she made an effort to integrate into the local community and to acquire British culture. Although she did not quite succeed and felt frustrated in the beginning, the process of assimilating into a new community had changed her from within her heart, more of which in the next section.

再回英國	I came back to the UK, again,
想法完全不同	having completely different thoughts.
這次要留下來居住	This time, I meant to settle down

壓力很大
找工作時面臨
經濟上
語言上
文化上的壓力
這些壓力對自我認同
影響很大
尤其
在自己熟悉的台灣
呼風喚雨
隨心所欲過日子
忽然間
被丟到人生地不熟
連語言都不通的地方時
挫折感
真的很大

但這過程
沒人能幫你
只能自己慢慢摸索
朋友及家人的支持很重要
慢慢的
認識多點人
生活裡也有了重心
挫折感自然會遠去

經歷了這個過程
任何人都會變的很獨立、很堅強
臉皮也變厚了
有 request 就要說出來
不喜歡什麼事也要說
否則別人永遠不知道你不喜歡這些事
想法上變得比較像英國人了

such a big pressure.
While I was looking for a job,
I was under pressure in terms of
finances
language,
and culture.
The pressure had a huge impact on
self identity.
Especially,
in Taiwan where I am familiar with,
I could have lived my life,
easily,
without any problems.
Suddenly,
I threw myself into an unfamiliar
place,
even without any familiar language.
A deep frustration,
really.

No one can help you
during this process.
You can only fumble along.
The support from friends and family
is very important.
Gradually,
you will get to know more people,
have an aim in your life,
then the frustration will be gone.

Going through this process,
anyone can become independent and
tough,
also, thick-skinned.
Expressing your request,
telling your dislike,
otherwise no one would know your
dislike.
My thoughts had become rather like
English.

Cindy also had a different thought on her return to the UK. She realized that this return was for settlement in the UK no matter how long it may be. Cindy had concerns about how difficult it could be to live a normal life like British people. Job hunting and the working culture seemed the prominent pressure she encountered while making a life in this foreign country. Language barriers, financial difficulties and cultural differences[18] were the factors she felt had considerable impact on her identity. All these thoughts did not appear during her first stay for study, even though the language barrier and cultural differences were still the same. Like most of other Taiwanese students, the financial issue was not a consideration, during her one year study, because she had prepared for the one-year study and living in the UK. Language, in a sense, for students, is a challenge to overcome in order to succeed in their study. It is relevant to living, but irrelevant to earning a living or to striving for a living. This too applies to cultural differences. Even though Cindy had studied in the UK before, she still felt that she was striving to live in an unfamiliar place without a familiar language. Those obstacles caused a deep frustration, but later, it had shifted to a positive thinking/attitude towards her life.

Cindy thought that assimilation and acculturation[19] into British Culture became prominent during her long stay. Frustration came along during the process of

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[18] The words from Peters (2003, p. 33) fully explain what I mean by cultural difference. 'Cultural difference does not just mean a different distribution of cultural attributes like religious beliefs of affiliations or of more or less family centred cultural practices (food, codes of polite conduct, dress norms and so on), but deeper differences in beliefs, value patterns and associated practices which do not just affect some parts of family life, but more general behavioural orientations'.

[19] Even though acculturation is included in the new model of assimilation (Faist, 2003), I would like to embrace more details here. Taking the stance of sociologist, Milton Gordon (Cusick, 1998, p. 129), 'Acculturation was likely to occur in the context of majority-minority social relations. It involved minor, often superficial adjustments in behaviour that could continue indefinitely without leading to changes in identity or the adoption of different norms and values'.

adaptation, assimilation and acculturation. She also had support from family and friends (she did not mention which culture friends and family were from). She set a goal in her life to get to know more people (again, she did not articulate which people) to relieve stress and reduce the frustration. It is interesting to see that in Cindy's second paragraph, she took the position of second person and then, all of a sudden, the last sentence changed back to the first person. In fact, in her Chinese writing, there is no 'I' to be seen. I interpreted the implication of which position she was writing to/from. The writing read to me as if she was telling other Taiwanese people (including herself) how we could hear from her experience. Going through the process empowered her and also changed her identity in a way that she knew how to express her likes and dislikes and how to break silence. The discovery of becoming more English in Cindy's thought denotes 'the work of identity production and reproduction through transformation and difference' (Kalra et al., 2005, p. 30). Diasporic consciousness formed from the negative to the positive is actually pervasive throughout our writing in all aspects as will be discovered later.

因爲個人環境改變	Due to the change of my personal circumstance,
變成人家的太太	I had become a wife.
自我認同上	In terms of self identity,
就算我拿到英國籍	I still deem myself a Taiwanese,
我還是認爲我是台灣人	even though I received an English passport.
努力容入英國社會	I had tried to adapt to English society,
但我永遠都不是英國人	but I am never English.

Nafisa sensed the identity transformation due to, mainly, the change of her role from being single to being a wife which coincided with the displacement from Taiwan to the UK. The political factor of diasporic consciousness, which Nafisa mentioned in her writing, is inevitably having an impact on identity production and reproduction. There was not much information about identity transformation given in this section of her writing, apart from her clearly-stated Taiwanese identity. She tried to assimilate into British culture, and yet was aware that she could never be British. From her writing, we get a clear map not only of geographical displacement but also of how the changes of social roles transform the identity per se.

工作後	Since working,
不再是學生	I was no longer a student.
生活方式改變	My life style had changed.
思索留在英國	I was thinking of the possibility of
的可能性	staying in the UK,
和生涯規劃	and my career in the future.
發現幾年下來	I found after all these years,
自己較能接受	I had accepted the English way of
英國的工作方式和制度	working and system more.
願意開始去關心	I had started to worry about
英國發生的社會事件	the social events that happened in
了解事件的演變	the UK
在和英國朋友聚會時	and the evolving of those social
會表達自己對事件的想法	events.
更想知道他們的看法	When going out with English friends,
	I'd express my own opinions on those
	events,
	and wanted to know their views on
	them.

Daniel expressed his transformation in a different way. Since he started considering settling in the UK, he had changed his life style and had started to make

connections with the country he lived in by means of concerning about or indirectly involving in the social events in the UK. From being a student to being conscious of diaspora, Daniel had found that throughout all these years working[20] in the UK had changed his attitude towards work. This change, however, did not result from his decision to stay in the UK, but it had started to affect him from the time he came to study.

Diasporic ideas are about belonging. When Cindy and Daniel came to study in the UK and Carina came to visit her fiancée, they were just visitors passing through who did not seek for belonging or identity in a guest country. On their return, almost as soon as they determined to settle in the UK, a guest country becomes a host country, and a sense of belonging seemed to become the imperative for diasporic subjects like them. They longed to be embraced, to be accepted as part of this country/community, but at the same time, they also noticed the differences within themselves and between the self and others. 'Diasporic subjects are carriers of a consciousness which provides an awareness of difference. This sense is a basic aspect of self-identity for diasporic subjects (Kalra et al., 2005, p. 30).'

Diasporic identity

'Identity is about belonging, about what you have in common with some people and what differentiates you from others. At its most basic it gives you a sense of personal location, the stable core to your individuality. But it is also about your

[20] PhD students in the engineering department, generally speaking, would deem themselves working for the project with no pay.

relationships, your complex involvement with others' (Weeks, 1990:88, cited in Weedon, 2004, p. 1). When some of us determined to settle in the UK, they started to want to connect with the land, the community, the language and even the hidden rules underneath the British culture. They wanted to physically belong to this land in terms of eating what people eat, doing what people do and seeing what people see, and ideologically belonging to a community that no one can obviously demarcate. Skeggs (2008, p. 11) argues that 'the feelings of belonging are produced by and then institutionalized into national identity' that is, there is not necessarily an equation between belonging and national identity. Rather, the 'equation of different maps of identification and belonging – maps which define and produce where and how individuals fit into the world – inevitably gave rise to a paradox... which is how can the individual be both cause and effect, both subject and subjected?' (Grossberg, 1996, p. 98) There are multilayered feelings of belonging whereby each human being, a complex agent, has different visions of it for different aspects of identity, such as personal identity, diasporic identity, cultural identity, and national identity. In addition, 'belonging must be negotiated, tested, confirmed, rejected or qualified again and again and not simply shown' (Kraus, 2001, p. 109). The concept of diasporic belonging, for us, is intricate in a way that we want to be embraced in the host land visibly and invisibly, but at the same time we still have strong feelings of belonging to Taiwan. No matter how hard we try, as Nafisa wrote, 'I am never British' and we never intended to become British. So what do we actually want to belong to and up to what level do we want to belong to a specific community/culture/country? It is the feeling of belonging that matters. It is also the memory of the past connecting to yearnings of the present

that is crucial to the search for the feeling of belonging (hooks, 2009). Even though using our memory of the recent past to examine our present diasporic identity, our memory of the long past that is embedded in our minds still comes into play. The feeling of belonging, too, constructs diasporic identity personally, culturally, socially and relationally, by which diasporic consciousness provides an awareness of difference. 'To share an identity is apparently to be bonded on the most fundamental levels: national, 'racial', ethnic, regional, local. And yet, identity is always particular, as much about difference as about shared belonging' (Gilroy, 1997, p. 301).

'Diasporic understanding, by focusing on transnational links and emphasizing a multiplicity of belongings and identities, can challenge the fixity of identity invoked by ethnicity' (Kalra et al., 2005, p. 16). Even though I have never deemed identity to be a fixed concept, our ethnic awareness inevitably has influence over our identities and may cause common characteristics that we may not notice until we sense, especially living abroad, the difference within ourselves and between us and others. 'Identities are constructed through, not outside, difference' (Hall, 2000, p. 17). Where then does the difference arise?

> 'Difference can be found within identities as well as between them. The other...can be recognized as part of the self;.....the self can no longer be plausibly understood as a unitary entity but appears instead as one fragile moment in the dialogic circuit that connects 'us with our 'others'' (Gilroy, 1997, p. 315).

There is an obvious difference between the group of us and others (British people) – our external appearance, including features, skin colour and languages, manifestly differentiates us from others, and the intrinsic values of Taiwanese culture that distinguish us in many non-verbal ways. 'Mead theorizes difference as implicit in the

shaping of the subject within the temporality of social relations' (Dunn, 1997, p. 701) The awareness of difference between us and others constructs our fluid identities throughout the time we live in the UK. The difference, however, is not the only characteristic that determines the personality of a single entity, as Currie argues, 'the identity of things, people, places, groups, nations and cultures is constituted by the logics of both sameness and difference' (2004, p. 3). Moreover, the difference within oneself is in accordance with individual conditions where there might be a comparison between old self and present self or between the self in the UK and the self in Taiwan. Time and space are not separable in regard to our diasporic identity (even though Grossberg (1996, p. 100) argues that time and space are separable and time is more fundamental than space), because not only our displacement within a different country and culture but also the duration of time immersing ourselves in British culture gives rise to our identity transformations.

Even as the difference within oneself seems individual and personal, the awareness of identity transformation requires social recognition and relationships to other people (Nelson, 2001). I want to understand not only 'how the person thinks, feels, and acts, what matters to her/him, how she/he sees her/himself' (Nelson, 2001, p. 72), but also how the person perceives the way other people think about, feel about, act toward, and see her/him, even though they may not be discernible. Thus, identities are socially, culturally and institutionally constructed (Currie, 2004; Dunn, 1997; Grossberg, 1996; Hall, 2000; Kalra et al., 2005; Rutherford, 1990; Weedon, 2004) and identity transformation is traced through the awareness of cultural sameness and difference. It is most unlikely that we can delineate our identities in detail for a specific

time (whether it was the past or the present), because identities are unstable, fluid, temporary, incomplete, in process, multiple and changing over time (Grossberg, 1996; Weedon, 2004). The effect on identity transformation, however, is not just caused by time and space, but, as Nelson suggests, 'more gradual changes are the effect of age, education, intimate relationships, or travel' (2001, p. 87). Our discovery of identity transformation may not simply be ascribed to the effect of displacement in terms of culture and language. Some members of our group were aware that the change in their social roles was prominent in their life too, in such a way that they could not distinguish whether the changes of identity were caused by the displacement from one place to another or by the change of social roles.

Since I drew their attention, in our workshops, exclusively to the effect of language and culture on identity transformation, I am hoping to reduce the effect of age, education, intimate relationship and travel that are vital to our lives mingling with that of diasporic characteristics on our discovery of identity transformation. On the one hand, all the elements, to some extent, overlap with each other on the map of tracing our identity transformation, and exert influences on each other in addition. None of the effects can be considered solely. My image of examining these living elements separately on identity transformation seems naïve and improper that, with the effect of other living elements, the research outcome may be misrepresented. On the other hand, we always live in a complicated world so that no single element can be practically discussed without intersecting with other living elements. At the same time, people who are in similar circumstances to us will be very likely to go through the same life events. In this regard, our writing may evoke memories of other Taiwanese's early

years in the UK in order to trace their identity transformation. 'What is significant about memories is not their surface validity as true records, but their active role in the construction of identity' (Schratz-Hadwich, 1995, p. 41). In addition to the individual lived experience, the mutual and reciprocal relationship/connection between 'self' and 'other' (in our case, the 'self' is us; the 'other' can denote people, language, culture or even the social structure in the UK) constructs the identity and raises the awareness of identity transformation (Furman et al., 2005; Schratz-Hadwich, 1995).

Identity transformation

The discussion about our personal changes was placed in the last workshop where there were only three of us physically involved. We, however, expressed our personal changes, without being able to determine what exactly had changed, through descriptions of linguistic and cultural predicaments we encountered. They will be discussed more in the next two chapters.

剛來英國時
不熟周遭環境
沒有工作
沒有朋友
生活沒有目標
也不太願意外出
慢慢變得孤僻
不太願意與人接觸
鎖在自己的世界裡
呆在網路世界上
變得更安靜、孤僻

工作後
開始交到朋友

When I just arrived in the UK,
unfamiliar surroundings and environment
I had no jobs,
no friends.
My life was aimless.
I wasn't willing to go out,
and became detached gradually.
I wasn't willing to get in touch with people,
locked in my own world.
and stayed in the online world.
I'd become even quieter and more detached.

After I started to work,
I made friends.

生活圈變大
我學會了客套的 conversation
western style 的交際
打開自己的心
與認識或不認識的朋友聊天
把心交出來
融入朋友圈裡
交到朋友
也學會招待朋友
for me,
it's very difficult
as I am not a social person.
But I found that
you have to
sometimes
in the UK

My life had expanded.
I had learned courteous conversation,
and Western style of communication.
Opening my heart,
chatting to friends or just acquaintances
giving out my heart,
integrating with local community,
thereby making friends,
and learning how to treat friends.
For me,
it's very difficult,
as I am not a sociable person.
But I found that
you have to,
sometimes,
in the UK.

不知是當了媽媽
還是在英國住久了
現在會更勇於表達對家人的關心
英國人常用卡片去關心別人
多到我覺得 Fan 濫
但不多不少我自己也會受影響
（我們家一向不重視的）
現在更會對家人表達感謝
以前 thank you 是難以啓口

Not sure whether it is becoming a mother
or living in the UK for long that changed me
I can express my concern for family now
British people always send cards to show
their concern
It feels to me overdone,
but more or less I'm affected.
(it's never an significant matter in my
family)
Now I'll express my gratitude for family
It was hard to say 'thank you'

更懂得生活
會去享受生活
可能是大環境影響
對於英國週日的寧靜
非常的喜歡
在這裡可以真正安靜下來的休閒
或去想事情
在台灣忙碌的社會
好像整個人永遠都很 busy
除非到鄉下地區
但英國的週日真的是很安靜

I know more about how to live a life
Know how to enjoy a life
Maybe I'm affected by the whole
environment
I like the tranquillity on Sundays in the UK
I really can have a peaceful time
or muse over things at leisure.
In the busy society in Taiwan,
the whole being seemed always very busy,
unless we went to the countryside.
But Sundays in the UK are really peaceful.

It was her job that encouraged Carina to change the way she lived in the UK. She was aware that, at the beginning of her stay, she had no social network in the UK at all. The only person she knew was her fiancé when they moved to the UK, and it was six months later when I came across her. I vividly remember, at our first meeting, Carina kept saying that I was the first Taiwanese she had met in person in the UK. We arranged to meet outside a Chinese supermarket where Taiwanese people have to settle for Chinese and Cantonese food and ingredients. Taiwanese food and ingredients were always a dream for us. After quick food shopping, we headed back to her house looking at the photos she took when she and her husband went backpacking over three months, across the Asian and European continents, from China back to the UK for settlement. At the time, she lost her aim in life because she could not work under the visa rule for fiancés. She got to know more British 'friends' through her husband. Those British friends, whose male partners were her husband's friends, attempted to make friends with Carina and helped her to accommodate the new environment. Unluckily, these 'indirect' friendships did not work miracles with the linguistic and cultural barriers because the topics they brought up most of the time were nothing Carina would be familiar with, while she was very new to this country and had no knowledge of the UK. She hid herself in the internet world, getting in touch with her family and friends in Taiwan and making more virtual friends all over the world 'on the internet'. Things started to change when she began to work.

They got married a year after they moved to the UK, and six months later, Carina got a job at her first interview. The job, which expanded her vision as well as her life, was deemed a way to connect to the 'real' British world. She had acquired the

British way of courteous conversation and Western style (to be precise, British style) of socialization by which, apart from her job, she started to invite friends to social events and made friends from the bottom of her heart. It sounds a general method of making friends, but it was hard for Carina because she was a very quiet and shy person, not to mention being in an unfamiliar environment and using a second language.

It is hard to ascribe Carina's personal change to her new environment for she had shifted from one stage of life to another. Becoming a mother made a huge difference to her. She had a shared topic with other British friends who had all become mothers and with the local community. Later in her writing she wrote about her personal change in terms of emotion and living attitude but was not sure whether it was because of British culture or becoming a mother. Sending cards on every occasion is common in the UK. To Carina, however, it is overdone when all the cards are then thrown to the recycling site. She also learned that it is a modest way to tell your family and friends that you care about them. After two months of difficult life with her new born baby, when they could not have managed if it was not for her sister's help, she felt that she was in her sister's debt. It was the first time she said 'thank you' to her sister and the card given to her sister also made Carina moved and touched. Becoming a mother certainly was an external change, but nonetheless the internal change it caused was profound. I suspect that British culture had had more of an impact on her personal change than the shift in her role.

Also, Carina had learned to slow down the pace of life and to enjoy the atmosphere of peacefulness and tranquillity in the UK. In Taiwan, people seem to exert themselves at work and, at the same time, some choose to play harder at their pleasure

in compensation. Many Taiwanese people's lives were fully occupied by work and they forgot how to enjoy their lives. Carina was one of them while in Taiwan. Over four years, she has now switched to a tranquil life at weekends easily and certainly enjoys life. Diasporic life had both deconstructed and then reconstructed her new identity, along with the effects of age, pregnancy, and the change of social role.

第一次進到英國
自己因爲英文差而自卑
當時耳朵一邊聽不到
又害怕又沮喪的情況下
我崩潰了
在房間裡狂哭
心裡想著
爲何要選擇這麼大的難題給自己
差點萌生退意
幸好
我的個性並不脆弱
熬過以後
便慢慢適應
即使有很多的挫折和困難
眼淚擦乾後
日子仍要繼續下去

When I first came to the UK,
I felt inferior because of my poor English.
I lost hearing in one of my ears then.
Under these terrifying and frustrating circumstances,
I collapsed.
I wailed miserably in my room,
and thought
why I made such a hard decision for myself.
I almost wanted to withdraw.
Fortunately,
I was not a fragile person.
I had got over this
and adapted myself.
Even though there were a lot of obstacles and difficulties,
wiping the tears off,
I still had to move on.

來到英國後
好像自己
不那麼 sociable
但 Dan 和 Carina 一致反駁
在他們眼中
我是個很 sociable 的人
但對我而言
跟英國人 Social 的困難
造成了這個想法
雖然知道自己在台灣時
或和台灣人相處時
可以非常健談

After I came to the UK,
I seemed
not that sociable,
but Dan and Carina refuted my claim immediately.
In their eyes,
I am a very sociable person,
to me,
the obstacle of interacting with British people
caused this thought.
Although I know
I can be loquacious

也很 sociable
不過遇到英國人
只能投降
還是非常令人氣餒

and sociable,
while I was in Taiwan
or being with Taiwanese.
But when I meet British people,
I can only give up
very frustrating

一次的 party 裡
大部分都是非 English speakers
大家都以英語爲第二外語
掌握英語的程度大同小異
比較不會害羞
不怕別人聽不懂
覺得自己比較像在講中文的自己
活潑、外向、愛開玩笑
自在地在 party 裡穿梭來去
但在英國人的 party 裡
自己就變得安靜、沈默
還是很享受 party 的氣氛
但似乎無法展現活潑的一面

Once in a party,
most of the party goers were non-English speakers.
Everyone spoke English as a second language,
our English levels were all similar.
I felt less shy,
and not afraid of making no sense.
I felt the 'I' in that party was more like the 'I' in Taiwan(ese).
I was lively, extrovert, and humorous,
chatted around in that party with ease.
But when I was in a party with all British people,
I'd become quiet and silent.
I still enjoyed the atmosphere of the party,
but was not able to show the lively side of me.

I feel less comfortable writing about my own writing. In fact, I am now still considering whether I should write from the 'I' position or from the 'she' position. In collective memory-work, the originator Haug (1987) suggests that people take the 'she' position to conduct the embodied practice throughout memory work. Some researchers who apply this methodology also conduct their work in this way (Crawford et al., 1992; Davies & Gannon, 2006), while some take another route to work from the 'I' position. Writing from the 'she' position may, in a sense, keep our reflections on our memories under strict surveillance, but to put it simply, it is the 'strict surveillance' that this methodology stresses. The issue of position did not worry me throughout our

workshops. On the one hand, unlike English, Chinese is not a very precise language in which speakers/writers need to specify the subject in their speaking/writing. While my participants put their writing down with no subjects, I was sometimes confused about whether they are writing from the position of 'I' or of the third person. Both in writing and discussion, even though we were aware that the subject in our memory was ourselves, leaving out the subject in our writing and talking, in a sense, blurred the boundary between 'I' and 'we', and expanded the space between collective and subjective experience. The English translation of our writing, which was made to conform to the rules of English grammar in order to make sense to non-Chinese speakers, may not foreground this issue. On the other hand, as a participant, I, along with others, wrote from the 'I' position to tell my memories, but, as a researcher, I wrote 'us' from a different 'I' position. 'The participant I' is telling the memory to deconstruct/reconstruct her identity while 'the researcher I' is helping to investigate any ambivalence and unspoken threads. Writing from the first person position is not always indulgent whilst I bear other people in mind as I write. Their virtual existence will be like invisible eyes watching my writing. In this regard, the 'I', as a researcher and the 'I', as a participant, will be working reciprocally to investigate my own writing.

I flew to the UK with someone, who I had not met before the day we flew together, although later we became very good friends. Looking back, I was not a poor English learner, but his level of English made me feel inferior. One frustration came after another. Losing hearing in one ear may be terrifying, but at the same time, it provided with me a good excuse to disguise my lack of confidence in English. The

physical problem would be cured eventually, even if I felt reluctant to recover from it. My attitude towards those obstacles, however, was still optimistic.

I was always a sociable person in Taiwan. My self awareness about being less sociable in the UK seemed inconsistent with Daniel's and Carina's understanding. As soon as they disagreed with me, my thoughts were assimilated into theirs. It seemed that when I was with Taiwanese people I was more sociable. We shared similar topics and concerns in the same language and culture, and those jokes or slang made sense to us. With British people, I was over cautious about not only making mistakes in speaking incorrect English and making no sense to native speakers, but also culturally misunderstanding and misbehaving in a social occasion. A great awareness of cultural difference made me unable to behave like the 'sociable I'. Daniel and Carina had only seen me on big occasions for different Taiwanese festivals where there were mostly Taiwanese people attending. They had no chance to observe me at academic occasions and some other social occasions with British people. I once went to a non-British party with a Taiwanese friend, and most of the people were from all over the Europe and the Middle East. I then found myself chatting as if I was in a Taiwanese party. I still cannot be sure whether it was because I felt comfortable with this friend's company or it was because no one seemed privileged in the English language. Another example was that, in an English-held party, three English speakers out of six people, once again, made me quieter and yet an active partygoer. I came to realize that the shared topic of adapting to British culture between people who are from different countries initiates the conversation immediately, not for the sake of being against Britain, but in order to

share the experience we had had. The interaction between people set off as soon as they found the commonality.

My diasporic identity had first come to my realisation on the first return to Taiwan after my first two-year stay. The international issues that I raised did not interest my friends, while the talk of their jobs[21] had drifted away from my attention. It felt odd to me that we still remained close but had less shared lives to discuss. We were drifting apart (or perhaps it was me drifting away from everyone). I had less knowledge of the day to day changes in Taiwan (including newest language usage) and had lost some connections with the people and the culture. Another noticeable change occurred when I attended a psychodrama workshop regarding trauma and psychodrama. We worked on our stories in Chinese, along with a few English instructions. I felt shocked and intimidated when other participants in that workshop shared their traumatic stories. It should not have been unfamiliar to me because I used to work in some organizations where clients always shared their sad and traumatic stories with us (counsellors and helpers). Why did it feel so shocking to me? I could sense the resistance to their stories from within immediately. I had been speaking English in the UK over two years at the time. The stories that we shared and listened to in English never struck my heart, straight and directly. It felt to me as if there was a veil between the stories in English and I, and the veil is, even now, still there but thinner. Whenever I started to have a conversation in English, the veil emerged spontaneously and could not be stripped off.

In fact, I felt safe hiding behind the veil. Chinese language, my mother tongue, was not

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[21] Most of my friends were working in the same field in which I used to study and work, so that we used to have shared topics and some thoughts in common.

functioning like English when it came to an intimate story. The words struck me hard, straight and instantly, without anything standing between the language and me. I lost the self protection in that workshop and refused to take any of those stories in.

面對不熟悉的環境	Facing an unfamiliar environment,
我盡量保持正面樂觀的態度	I tried to be positive and optimistic.
我學習到	I have learned that
不要凡事拿來跟台灣比	do not compare everything with Taiwan.
每個國家與文化有其運作的方式	Every country has its own culture and
要懂得 appreciate and understand how it works	conduct of social system.
	We must know how to appreciate and
	understand how it works.
要是真的想家	If you really feel homesick
或非常不適應	or ill-adapted
廁所門關起來	shut the door
大哭一場	give full vent to your feelings
把在英國受挫的委屈	in a good wail
哭掉哭完	admit the weak side of self
承認自己有脆弱的一面	face it
勇於面對	even, ask for help
甚至踏出門去求助	It's no shame!
不是丟臉的事	This is what I learned from British
這是我看英國紀錄片的心得	documentaries.

Nafisa shared her writing with me through email correspondence. She learned to be positive and optimistic in an unfamiliar environment when encountering any unreasonable situation. The middle part of her writing in Chinese looked to me more like an experienced resident giving instructions to new comers. Perhaps this was what she had been through and she worked out the strategies to overcome the obstacles in the UK. The vulnerable self, for most Taiwanese diasporas, was not normally expressed while in Taiwan – admitting the most vulnerable part of the self was such a shame. As I mentioned earlier, the absence of subjects is the most salient characteristic

as well as the most confusing one in Chinese writing. It can be used in the way in which people attempt to avoid embarrassment about exposing themselves, or sometimes to give advice in an indirect way from their own experience. In Nafisa's somehow implicit writing, what can be assured was that she had changed her attitude towards dealing with difficulties in which she was allowed to be vulnerable and sad but, after a wave of self-pity, she determined to stand up and fight back. Asking for help was not a shame and worth trying, especially when we live abroad. While she referred to British documentaries, she really meant to 'appreciate and understand' how the British social system is operating. She obtained it not only as the knowledge of British culture, but also as the means of bolstering her morale.

Tentative findings

We had all changed in certain ways. Some talked about the differences in their thinking while others noticed the change in their behaviour. No matter what we had changed, whatever the reasons, the change had already been embodied into our developing identities. Because 'identities are never unified and, in late modern times, increasingly fragmented and fractured; never singular but multiply constructed across different, often intersecting and antagonistic, discourses, practices and positions (Hall, 2000, p. 17).' Butler (1993, pp. 229) argues that 'one acquires subjectivity through reiteration and the temporal logic that governs it. However, through the same process, one's subjectivity can be challenged, even destabilized. Accordingly, every identity is constituted by discursive formation as much as by deformation' (cited in Erni, 2008, pp. 195-196). If I am going to look into our identity transformation, I will have to find

what my identity was. Unfortunately, I cannot tell you what kind of self exactly I was. It is easy to set a starting point of the time we arrived in the UK, but since when had we started to change our attitudes, values, thoughts, eating habits, the way we talk, the way we behave and even more seriously, identities? I have not seen a turning point or a breakthrough since we started to interrogate our diasporic state and personal changes. Therefore, the term of identity transformation does not seem legitimate here. Our identities are irregularly changing and shifting over the lumpy and bumpy journey and will not seem to stop. The fragmented and fractured identities that had been deconstructed through the lives we live in the UK are shifting along with the process of reconstruction. We had forcibly deconstructed our original world of knowledge and reconstructed a new world of knowledge through different discourses and positions. This is part of the identity shifting where the path was most of the time circling, spiralling, winding and even tangled so that I cannot find the beginning or the end.

Even though I look at how language and culture have impacted on our diasporic identity, it is hard to separate other factors from language and culture. Identity is shifting along our lives without the beginning and the end, but nonetheless, we can recognise our changes in our diasporic mind and identities. Our changes are only discernible when fractures, conflict, and discomfort within us or between self and others take place. Without being offered a proper way to express her appreciation, Carina, for instance, could not even say thank you to her beloved family before she acquired British culture. It is such a typical Taiwanese feature in which showing love and concern directly to family is always awkward for Taiwanese people. She now felt comfortable and easy to show love by sending cards. Cindy and Nafisa had formed a

vulnerable but strong inner self to fight against the difficulties and to adapt to the new culture. The diasporic state has left a significant mark on their identities. My feelings towards Chinese have changed dramatically. Without the protective veil between me and the language, I become raw and vulnerable to those powerful stories. This diasporic state also made a remarkable change in me, and my diasporic identity has been formed since.

Mid-August, 2008, Taiwan

I was sitting in a restaurant with my university mates who I met once every two years since I came to the UK. I was so happy to catch up with them, but felt unhappy with myself speaking slowly and stammering in my mind. It was that I could not speak Chinese fluently, but that I had to try very hard not to mix any English words in my speaking. It was a common thing that overseas students mixed English words, even sentences, in speaking Chinese, because we understood each other and English words sometimes made better sense than Chinese ones in certain situations. I could sense my mind whooshing so fast while speaking Chinese. I had to think one step forward to choose proper Chinese words and terms to replace those English words that almost slipped out of my tongue. It made me tired so quickly.

A couple of hours later, Mr. Cool, a university mate who had got this nickname for his cold look, looked at me seriously.

'Ying-Lin, your Chinese is still good,' he said.

Chun, who sat next to Mr. Cool, suddenly turned to look at him as if he had heard the oddest remark in the world.

'Of course! This is my mother tongue!' I spontaneously replied.

'She is just studying abroad, not becoming British!' Chun still could not believe what he had heard, but I was pondering over their words.

'I thought you might have an accent in your Chinese' Mr. Cool explained.

'Well, I have an accent in English rather than Chinese.' I didn't want them to know that I tried very hard to stay in the whole Chinese thinking.

'Do you think in English or in Chinese?' Wow! He really knew something.

'Both.'

'But I haven't heard a word you said in English.' Mr. Cool stayed really cool.

'I tried not to.'

'Why?'

'Yeah, why? Have you picked up Tony Blair's accent? Come on! Let's hear it.' Another mate joined in.

'I don't feel comfortable speaking any English in front of you guys. Nobody speaks English here.' I knew they understood English, but also sensed the discomfort in me.

'Fair enough,' he looked into my eyes. Phew! He finally let go.

I looked at them and my mind slowly drifted elsewhere: where was the discomfort coming from? Was it the effect of my diasporic state? Or the diasporic identity has formed in me already?

CHAPTER GREEN – LANGUAGE AND IDENTITY

Autumn, 2005, Jane's office

'Thank you, Jane. See you next time!' My tutorial with Jane went very well throughout.

'You are welcome, Ying-Lin,' Jane smiled.

Even though I could not recognize my Chinese name in the way Jane spoke, I was still feeling pleased and contented after the tutorial. I got out of the building and was heading straight to the library. I had only walked away from the building for thirty seconds when someone was calling me.

'Martha!' It was Jane, about thirty yards behind me, calling out loud.

I turned my head soon after I heard it and wondered what was going on.

'You forgot this.' Jane panted and handed me a few pieces of paper that I left on her desk.

'Oh, thank you!' I said. She seemed to have run a little before she caught me.

'I was calling you Ying-Lin, Ying-Lin, but you seemed not to recognise the words I called at all. I was thinking, oh damn it! I got the words wrong. She is walking further now. What shall I do? What shall I do? And I recalled your other name. I then called 'Martha' and you turned around!' said Jane briskly.

'I'm so sorry Jane. I didn't hear you calling me 嫈琳 (Ying-Lin).' I was wondering whether I did not hear her calling at all or the name just made no sense to me.

Name and identity

I had two names. I still do. Martha, the English name, was chosen by me for an English course when I was fourteen, in secondary school. In fact, we (the whole class) only used our English names in one lesson throughout the year. I had not used it until doing my master's degree. Advanced IT skills were compulsorily required in our laboratory, therefore the English name, Martha, long gone, had returned and become my first and only choice for computer technology. Funnily enough, I never thought of using the English translation of my Chinese name while some of my fellow students and my supervisor chose Chinese names as their usernames. Thus, the English-speaking system of computer technology was not the forcing factor that made me choose an English name. At the time, I still retained my Chinese name in real life, and Martha only existed in the virtual world as a username.

As soon as I came to study in the UK in 2004, the English name, Martha had become embodied as a meaningful identity to me in no time, because apart from the official correspondence with the university, I used Martha on every single occasion. I had almost forgotten my Chinese name until Jane asked me about it. Jane was the first one who was determined to call me Ying-Lin (hereafter Chinese pronunciation – Ying-Lin, and English pronunciation – Ying-Lin, by using different fonts). I did not really

mind which name was being called, because both names represented my identity differently in certain ways. The Ying-Lin Jane called in that morning did not catch my attention at all, but I recognised her voice as soon as she called me Martha. On the one hand, Martha was making more sense than Ying-Lin in an English context wherein Ying-Lin had not yet been, and would not be located properly. On the other hand, the English translation without proper tones[22] sounded no meaningful words to me, and any words that did not make sense to me sounded like a noise that I could easily ignore. That is to say, Jane's 'Ying-Lin' was, to some extent, a new identity for me. I have adopted 'Ying-Lin' since then.

I started to introduce myself as Ying-Lin to non-Chinese speakers whereas I still retained my English name, Martha, in front of Chinese speakers (including all Chinese speaking nationalities). Oddly enough, 'Martha' had eventually evolved into a name in Chinese and of course Taiwanese friends all called me now by the 'Chinese nickname 殺殺 (pronounced SaSa – the pronunciation sounds feminine, but the literal meaning is 'killing')' that had been derived from Martha. I actually feel more comfortable to introduce myself as Martha for any first contact with new Chinese speaking friends as if I could keep my privacy by hiding behind a name in different language. As I mentioned earlier in Chapter Red, the Chinese language possesses the strong power to penetrate through me and, in a sense, the Chinese name Ying-Lin possesses the same power to intimate my identity to people who speak Chinese. The

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[22] There are five tones in oral Chinese. For non-Chinese speakers, it is almost impossible to distinguish the difference between these five tones.

rather 'irrational' fear of being seen through gets stuck in me. The ideological protection of Martha, however, was ruptured when the Chinese nickname of Martha was generated. The Chinese nickname, 殺殺, on the one hand, brings out the atmosphere of intimacy between me and people, the literal meaning of which denotes part of my personality while speaking Chinese, on the other hand. Thus, Martha, in this case, is not the masquerade anymore – the name has facilitated an unstable and multilayered identity (Barker & Galasinski, 2001) to develop towards a liminal space where the boundary between English and Chinese has partly been smudged and partly remained clear.

Ying-Lin, too, like Martha, has created a liminal space for me to hide, and at the same time, prevent me from directly being exposed to the harm which is obviously just an imagined illusion in my mind. Ying-Lin definitely does not feel the same way to me as Ying-Lin does. Ying-Lin not only raises/creates another layer of my identity, but also enriches and complicates my identity. It is not the name per se that makes the difference, but the feeling, the sense, and the emotion it can call forth to embody the symbol.

The name issue bothered none of our group but me, because all the participants seemed to use their English names comfortably and consistently in any occasions in the UK without hesitation. In the beginning of my stay, like Ada's 'divided' identity in Chinese name and English name (Jackson, 2008), I felt the 'divided' identity, not because of these names in different languages, but for the meaning each name took on as we were speaking two different languages. This naming issue is not the most

profound factor to substantially change my identity, despite the fact that it indeed threw me into confusion. What affects my identity the most, like others in our group, are language and culture. Identity is not only changing over time and space (Edwards, 2006), but for me, also weaving through the boundary between English and Chinese, back and forth.

Language and identity

Language is indeed constitutive of and constituted by identity (Norton, 1997, 2000). The relationship between language and identity has been widely investigated, the theories of which have also been developed over time and across various disciplines. Linguistic study is the major field, but this is divided into many subfields in Linguistics from different perspectives. Many of them go into too much detail for me about language itself (see Chaudhary, 2009; Kiely, 2006; Mills, 2001; Reyes & Lo, 2009; Riley, 2007; Seeba, 1996 etc. for more examples about the interrelation between language and identity in terms of linguistics). Linguistics is actually out of my concern here, since I am more interested in the subject of language in relation to emotion and attitude (Hannerz, 1973), for 'the subject has human agency' (Norton, 1997, p. 411).

Thus, in the social setting, taking a poststructuralist stance on language and identity, language is performative as Butler insists (Salih, 2002), and identity is complex, contradictory, multifaceted, dynamic across time and space, and discursive-performative (Barker & Galasinski, 2001; Norton, 1997). Despite the fact that language, a context-specific tool, acts as the means and medium to deliver the multiple narratives of the self and self-awareness, it constructs and constrains the self, the subject of

language. Therefore, the subject of language must be placed in the social context to be constantly aware of the changes (or no changes) of a 'coherent' self or the (in)consistency of a 'fractured' self in different languages.

Assimilation into a new country entails not only acculturation, but also language learning in addition to a mother tongue. Thus, second language learners will encounter complicated processes of constructing identities in such a way that the different thinking systems of two languages (and cultures) subvert not only the personal recognition of language ideology but also the existing social interaction. 'Identity is a process of becoming' (Barker & Galasinski, 2001, p. 30) and shifting built from sameness and difference in the context of the social. When we moved from Taiwan to the UK, the sameness and the difference had been magnified, over time and across the geographical space, by different languages.

All the participants favoured Chinese in conducting our workshops in both discussions and writings. I was left to do the translation as a result. Translation is always difficult and almost impossible for conveying the complete meaning (and feeling) to a different language, because, 'in a language, everything is culturally produced, beginning with language itself' (Aixela, 1996, p. 57). Translation is a shift as well as a link between not only two languages but also two cultures (Eco, 2003). Our writing/speaking always carries our histories and shared assumptions within the same culture in an invisible way (Hoffman, 1998). Translating the words into another language (and culture) is not always comprehensible, therefore taking translation as a process of negotiation between source language and target language is necessary (Eco, 2003; Kaiser-Cooke, 2004). The negotiation here is not only between the languages

(and cultures, needless to say) of English and Chinese, but also between my perceptions and interpretations and the participants' texts. I was the one who selected these extracts from our writings in accordance with the theme of this dissertation and translated those writings into what I had understood of it. As a human translator, my logic and my own preference for words gave rise to the version readers are now reading. 'For Translation Studies in particular, this will mean regarding not only translating as a complex activity, but the human translator as a complex system whose functioning depends on the fact of its subjective individualised existence in an objectively existing entity – the world' suggests Kaiser-Cooke (2004, p. 17).

剛開始 temping 時
我常常很難 follow
同事們的話題
或是反應太慢
等到我都聽懂了
也“想清楚”自己的意見
和“英文句型”後
準備要說時
Timing 已經過了
同事早跳到下一個話題上了…
所以一開始上班時
同事們應該都覺得我很安靜

When I started temping
It was hard for me to follow
the topic of conversation between
colleagues and
sometimes I reacted too slowly
The timing was always too late.
When I understood and
then 'pondered' over my opinion and
'English sentences' and was
ready to speak,
they had skipped to the next topic.
My colleagues might think I was quiet
in the beginning.

有一次是在冬天
我的位置剛好在 radiator 旁
我同事說熱
問我暖氣有沒有開
我聽錯了
我以爲她覺得冷
我說暖氣開了
如果她還是覺得冷
我也沒辦法
過了 10 秒鐘

Once in a winter,
I sat beside the radiator.
My colleague said it's hot and
asked me whether the heater was on
I misheard
I thought she felt cold
I said the heater is on
I could do nothing
if she still felt cold.
But ten seconds later,
I just realized she felt hot.

才發現原來她覺得熱
才告訴她我把暖氣關了
當時覺得很尷尬

很多時候她們說的笑話
我聽不懂
很多事情也必須得解釋兩次我才聽的懂
很幸運的是
我同事們人都很好
她們沒有因爲這樣就排斥我
但自己心裡卻很不是滋味的

And then I told her I've switched it off.
I felt very embarrassed at the time.

Most of the time, I could not understand
their jokes.
Many times I needed them to explain
twice in order to understand.
Luckily,
My colleagues were all very nice.
They did not reject me because of this,
but I felt unhappy and unsatisfied.

Cindy's stories demonstrated the general problems that second language learners mostly experience when they are in the process of assimilating into a new environment. She mentioned that 'she reacted too slowly' towards their conversation in the first story, and in the second story, the 'realization of ten seconds later' indeed caused an embarrassment because of her misunderstanding of the words. The realisation of 'ten seconds late' was an interesting but typical example for second language learners. It happened to me too. Words sometimes lingered in my mind when I was in doubt about whether I got the meaning right or not. Thus, the late realisation was somehow deemed a slow reaction. The slow reaction, however, was not part of Cindy's personality. She is quite a competitive person as far as I know. In fact, she also implied in her writing that she was 'not' the quiet person her colleagues thought. The silence was spent 'pondering' over her opinions and 'structuring her English sentences' in order to join her colleagues' conversation. The silence, unfortunately, remained too long for Cindy to join in, even though the process might only have taken five seconds. While people are in conversation, especially in their first language, words flow freely.

People assume that the person who remains silent has no opinions to throw in and continue their conversation without realising that second language learners need an instant to imbibe the information in the early stages of their learning. Therefore, Cindy lost the moment to catch them up and was unable to show her 'real' self due to insufficient language proficiency and a lack of social and cultural knowledge where language played a vital role. Second language learners have difficulty gaining access to the social networks of the native speakers because language is a prior condition of the entry to these networks (Norton, 2000, p. 47). Cindy was lucky that her colleagues were being fair and nice to her. The social network at this point was open to her, but at the same time, she also made a lot of effort to assimilate into the new social network. Her unhappiness at not coming across as the same person in both languages, however, made her aware that she was, in a sense, in need of working her English up to the native.

From Cindy's writing, I cannot easily make out the shifting process of her identity. But interestingly, Cindy's story perfectly illustrates the concept that:

> 'Identities as descriptions in language are achieved in the everyday flow of language and stabilized as categories through their embedding in the pragmatic narratives of our day-to-day social conduct. Thus, the claim that language is constitutive of identity is not simply an abstract philosophical one, but is an argument located in the everyday social conversations of 'ordinary' life.' (Barker & Galasinski, 2001, p. 44)

Even though her writing was only present in this extract from the first workshop and one email correspondence with me, it is still quite incisively representative of her personality or at least what I personally knew of her.

每天不懂裝懂去上班
因爲語言的障礙

I pretended to understand English at work everyday
Because of the language barrier

加上自己心理因素
讓自己的上班日子
過得很累很痛苦
但我知道我要克服
我也相信自己可以做得到
當一個普通的 receptionist
我要比當地人付出
更多更多的努力

and the psychological factors,
I felt extremely tired and distressed
while working,
but I knew I had to overcome it.
I also believed that I could make it.
Being a general receptionist,
I had to make a lot more effort
than the locals.

Carina's concern and experience here can be commonly found within any group of diaspora who are determined to make an effort to assimilate into their new world. She lost her self confidence because of the language barrier, even though she had taught English in Taiwan. She worked as a receptionist in a dentist clinic. Being a normal receptionist, she felt that she had to put much more effort into work than anyone else in that clinic just because English was not her first language. She certainly had a sufficient level of oral proficiency in English in order to deal with her daily life. When Carina stepped out, however, into the local community, everything seemed to be affected by her overt self-awareness of speaking English differently. When she could not gain full control of the language, she then lost her self confidence. It is interesting that she pretended to understand what people said. Some people may think it is unnecessary, but I had the same experience and completely understand how Carina felt at work. Asking people to speak again for something she did not understand was not difficult, but the thoughts and feelings behind this behaviour were various and complicated. Firstly, she would feel it was not professional, asking others to repeat slowly and frequently. Her job, however, either speaking on the phone or in face-to-face conversations, involved some medical terms that she had not heard before. People may assume that whoever works in the clinic must be well trained or have relevant knowledge, even a

receptionist, and this assumption may cause the confusion and misunderstanding leading to the emotional distress and loss of self-confidence. Secondly, she would feel incapable if she kept asking people to repeat what she did not understand. The fear of being incapable and bothersome to people refrained her from speaking to people freely and comfortably. On the one hand, both factors resulted in her distressed feeling at work, but on the other hand, toughened her in a way that she was determined to overcome those difficulties and made efforts to be a 'normal' receptionist. Those situations never happened when she was working in Taiwan, using Chinese. The blow that fell on Carina had transformed her from a self-confident person into a shy person with no confidence, and later, had kept having the influence on her to transform her again into a tough person who had successfully defeated the inner fear (or perhaps the toughness was in her blood and the circumstances triggered it off).

當我用英文交談時
似乎很多話語都是很受限的
即便現在已經可以
較無困難地使用英語
但就像工作時跟小孩對話
很多時候都覺得自己
好像“殘障人士”
沒辦法把骨子裡要說的東西
表達出來
上次和一個8歲的小孩的對話後
在車上我便一直思考
到底是我個性的問題
這麼不能忍，就脾氣爆發
還是因爲無法
好好掌控語言的關係？
我是對他們生氣
還是對自己生氣？

When I spoke in English,
it seemed that my wording was
limited.
Even though I could use English
with little difficulty now,
I still felt like
a 'verbally disabled' person.
For example, when I spoke to the
children on my working bus,
I couldn't accurately express what
I wanted to say.
I had been thinking after a
conversation
with an 8-year-old in the bus.
Was it that I couldn't control my
temper?
Was it my personality?
Or it was because I could not
get a good grip on the language?

如果我今天可以用
自己的語言好好說
我是否就比較可以
控制自己的脾氣呢？

Was I mad at them
or actually at myself?
If I could use my mother tongue to
talk to them,
would I be able to control my temper?

Insufficient vocabularies and incorrect English usage restricted my communication with others, especially with children. As a second language learner, 'I have to add a bottom to the language that I learned from the top', said Hoffman in 'Lost in Translation' (1998, p. 217). Unlike second language learners, acquiring the knowledge of the world prior to the additional language, children apparently learn the knowledge of this world and their first languages from the bottom at the same time. The enormous gap between children and myself had caused several incidents like the one I mentioned above. I was always being placed in a situation where I failed to use simple English to communicate with them when they had occasional disagreements. The language I learned from the top did not privilege me to talk them through what they needed to learn. I was aware that many times the language I used was nowhere close to their experiences and, even worse, was that I stammered when explaining myself. I felt like a 'verbally disabled' person who could not be who she really was when speaking Chinese. I was pondering whether I was truly a bad-tempered person who had no patience with children or if it was that I could not explain myself to the children, which made me lose my temper. I had not worked it out until recently I spoke to my nine-year-old nephew in Taiwan. I was being firm but calm as if everything was in control, even the silence, and talked him out when he was being grumpy. I could not, however, be the same person, while speaking in English, as I was in Chinese. When adults talk children through some behaviours and attitudes they need to learn, adults are expected

to speak fluently without stammering and hesitation. The uncertain attitude, searching for words, deprived me of power whilst I was in charge in the bus. At the same time, children were confused by my uncertainty in choosing proper words and a lack of immediate response when they talked back to me. The immediate response to their inappropriate language and behaviour played a crucial role in building up effective communication and earning their trust in me. I occasionally failed to smooth away the tense situation between me and the children due to my 'non-native' English usage. Those incidents, which may, for them, be just some of those arguments they had with adults, had become imprinted on my mind. To be precise, it was not the detail of the arguments that I remembered, but the moment that I failed to do what I wanted to (was supposed to) do as an adult. Those moments are deeply remembered and at the same time knocked my inner self down. I could not help but think that I was incapable of successfully communicating with children, which was an easy job for me while speaking Chinese. The doubt about my ability deprived me of being who I was. My identity claims as an adult unravelled somewhat.

Not only did the feeling of inability change the way I thought about myself, but also the language itself did. Over these years of leaning English and becoming involved in the local community, I had discovered that the syntax and ideology of a first language constructs people's logic and that one's lexicon denotes and connotes personality and identity. Apart from the above story, I could not express the witty part (which is the most fundamental element in social occasions) of me in English, while I could naturally make a witty remark in Chinese. Undoubtedly, being witty requires a high level of language proficiency and a deep understanding of a culture. English,

however, had not yet entered my body (Hoffman, 1998, p. 245), soaked into my blood, not fully yet. It takes time. Notwithstanding the non-gut-feeling for English, the sharp contrast between the English me and the Chinese me forces me to face the reality that different languages not only bring out different parts of me, but in a sense, also form a new identity in me. As time goes by, the English me and the Chinese me had been negotiating to integrate with each other and to maintain the balance in between, and yet the balance is still shifting along with my lived experience in the UK. The balance always tilts to one side or the other, depending on which language settings I involve more at the time.

小時候住在客家庄	I lived in a Hakka village[23] when little,
可是卻一句客家話都不會說	but I spoke no Hakka.
這並不影響我的社交	It did not affect my social life.
至少我當時不覺得	Least I did not think so then.
我想是因爲我的國語	It may be because my Chinese
比其它小朋友說的相對標準吧	was more standard than other children.
至於閩南語	As for Taiwanese,
我想以當年政府獨尊國語	at the time, the government exclusively
而排斥方言的政策之下	advocated Chinese (Mandarin) and prohibited Taiwanese.
像我們這樣的“外省人”	It was such a favour that We ‘mainlanders’ were willing
有意願學想方言	to learn dialects.
已經算很有誠意了	We always won a round of applause,
就算講得再不輪轉	Even if we spoke broken Taiwanese.
都會得來一陣掌聲	Although I had not known my
雖然長大後才知道	Taiwanese was so terrible
原來我的閔南語講的這麼爛	
語言本來就是需要多多練習	

[23] There are two significant ethnicities in Taiwan, Han ethnicity and aboriginals. There are more sub-ethnicities which all speak different languages in each group. The former includes mainlanders speaking Hoklo (known as standard Chinese), Hakka speaking Hakka, Taiwanese speaking Taiwanese Hokkien (known as Taiwanese), and the latter includes 14 different tribes speaking all different languages. Standard Chinese is the official and national language, but in people's daily lives, they try to keep their mother tongue.

像我這樣在喝彩中學習的好運人
當然不會排斥練習

後來搬到墨西哥去
即然我要在人家國家混三年
他們的語言當然要學
西班牙對我而言是全新的語言
即便我講的再爛
還是可以得到一陣掌聲
我學西語時
很少人看到我這張"外國臉"
講著二二六六的西班牙語時
會給我臉色看的
大部份的人甚至很技巧的糾正我的發音、用字
或者使用他們認爲我比較容易懂的字

英國人就沒給我這種待遇
去市場買個菜
讓我覺得我的英語
跟英國人的英語不一樣
其中的隔閡不單單是腔調的問題
還有英國人說話的
語調、遣詞用字及語法
都跟我會的不太相同
當我沒聽懂時
大部份的英國人就會把音量放大
重覆一次
不懂的單字
你講再大聲
我還是不懂啊
不知道是英國人比較
不善跟陌生人打交道

until I grew up.
Oral practice is the only way to learn a language
A lucky person like me who learned a language in the atmosphere of compliments,
will never say no to practice.

I then moved to Mexico
Since I had to live in Mexico for three years,
I surely had to learn their language.
Spanish was a brand new language for me.
Even though I spoke terrible Spanish,
I would still win a round of applause.
When I was learning Spanish,
most people would strategically correct my pronunciation and wording or even would use easy words that they think I would understand.
No one would be unfriendly to me,
when people saw my 'foreign face' speaking terrible Spanish.

English did not treat me the same way
When I went market shopping,
I could sense that my English was different from British English.
The barrier is not just the accent.
The phonology, phraseology and syntax that British people use were different from what I had learned.
When I did not understand,
most British people would repeat and speak louder.
But however loud you speak,
the word I don't understand
will not become a known one.
I am not sure it's because British people

還是他們認爲
全世界每個人都理所當然說英語
剛開始在英國生活時
與人交談讓我非常挫敗
因爲溝通上的障礙
讓我好長一段時間不太敢走出門

are not good at making contact with strangers
or because they take for granted that everyone in the world should speak English.
From the very beginning of living in the UK,
I felt very frustrated talking to people.
Because of the barrier of communication,
I dared not go out for a long time.

我不會因爲某項事情沒學好
就整個質疑我自身的價值
或自我迷失
但在我的英語能力沒能百分百掌握時
我連個工作都不敢去找
甚至自卑到連去 Tesco 打工都不敢
爲什麼語言能力
對“自我價值”的認知
產生這麼大的影響力？
在我們這次的會議中
似乎每個人都認爲在國外生活時
語言能力對我們的定位
有絕大的影響
這是我還沒能找出解釋的問題

I will not question my own value of self
or lose my self
just because I do not acquire a certain thing.
But when I could not fully master English,
I did not dare to look for a job.
I even felt too inferior to get a job in Tescos.
Why does language proficiency have such a strong impact on the recognition of 'self value'?
In this workshop,
everyone seemed to think that while living abroad,
language competency definitely has a considerable impact on our identity.
I still found no answer to this question.

May's first passage told about the history of her learning additional dialects – Hakka and Taiwanese, in Taiwan. During the 1980s, May's standard Chinese advantaged her wherever she lived because Taiwan was under the policy of advocating standard Chinese. People who possess a dominant language can live a fairly easy life in

a dominant culture. Since learning an additional language is not the imperative for living, support and compliments may be required to keep up motivation. May had been lucky to have had support and compliments to get her to practice without feeling embarrassed, even if she spoke terrible Hakka and Taiwanese to them. People had been very kind to her and at the same time, appreciated her making efforts to learn 'their' languages. To some extent, learning their languages could imply that she, as a descendant of the Mainland Chinese who held relatively stronger political power in the society, accepted not only their languages, but their cultures. The political ideology, especially during that particular time in Taiwan, behind and beyond those languages was profound but away from our focus here. Language learning, in a sense, cannot be truly independent of history, culture and political power. Notwithstanding, the process of dialect learning itself had an influence on May, especially on her attitude of learning a language.

Fostering this positive attitude in her, May gained positive experiences in learning any languages but English. Comparing her different experiences in Mexico and the UK, it is intriguing that people seem to make certain assumptions when they see 'foreign faces'. What May had experienced in Mexico and the UK conjured up our experiences with English speakers and other language speakers. Mexican people did not expect a 'different-looking' person, like May, to speak Spanish perfectly; therefore they treated her as a beginning language learner, even passionately teaching her how to speak or pronounce correctly. This way of communication eased May's mind and made her feel more comfortable to talk. In contrast to Mexican, English speakers did not seem to take account of whether people with 'foreign faces' speak (British) English

well or not while talking to them. I had the same experiences as May did in the UK. This part of May's writing was not discussed during the second 'long-distance' workshop due to the technical problems. We only did one quick reading out loud (through the phone) with her for the group. The whole thing left me interpreting my opinions on our shared experiences that she pointed out in her writing. Native English speakers hear 'pardon' as an indication of 'not hearing the words properly', so they speak louder again rather than slowing down their speaking. They did not realise that 'pardon' may si gnify 'I don't understand the words/sentences/concepts/accents' for non-native English speakers. As second language learners, the way we learn English from the top (or the middle) confuses English speakers in that they cannot predict what words we may or may not know while they can easily assume that children generally do not know high level of words. According to my personal experience, a second language learner who does not major in English acquires vocabularies from the top – the professional level of words for work, to bottom – the words in daily life, but in fact, neither of these is sufficiently acquired. Thus, in some social encounters with random people who have less knowledge of English learners, 'pardon' only carries its normal meaning and implication to them. Under this circumstance, we may feel uncomfortable to bother people with asking them to repeat over and over or explaining the fact to them. The response May received was perhaps normal and usual for English speakers, but crossing language and culture, it became an unfriendly response.

From May's story, the complex connections between language and identity are greater than I expected. Language and the person's language learning history, history of language and language learning context serve as co-implicated in the relationship

between language and identity. Those factors are obvious but indirect. Learning a language in addition to the dominant one seems less demanding than a dominant language in a general sense. To May, learning Spanish and English was no longer a simple task such as learning an additional language (like Hakka and Taiwanese), which sounds more like having fun with childhood friends. Since she chose to, for either her own will or being forced, to live in Mexico and the UK, learning both languages has become serious, about living, about surviving. In May's story, Mexican people seem more considerate and friendly in comparison to British people. This is, however, a comparison based on entirely unequal criteria. English is the international language that stands out against any other language in the world, while Spanish, like Chinese, is just one of many other languages. 'Internationalisation' endows English with distinguishing features since it has been spoken all over the world and developed into multiple facets of English. The language is diverse and dynamic at this moment. When a language is being used in different countries, it will eventually evolve into the language that suits each culture. That is to say, there will be no 'universal standard' or 'solely correct' English, while other languages are merely developed within one or two countries. In these circumstances, English speakers may open their minds to accept different 'culturalised' English or accented English, and yet they are not aware of the truth that, especially for second language learners who mostly learn American English like Taiwanese people, all accents other than the American one may not easily make sense to them. It was not the different English that discouraged May, but the fact that British people simply assumed that whoever speaks English can fully understand their conversation that frustrated her.

May was a confident person in general. As she said, she was not the person who would be in doubt as to herself at all, but the language issue truly made her feel inferior and lose her confidence in looking for a job, and even going out to meet people. She was affected by the level at which she mastered the basic communicative device, not in terms of basic survival, but in the disturbing aspect of self-assurance. So are/were we. To diaspora, mastering a dominant language in a country seems a radical factor of acculturation. Ironically, if this was true, how would May not be affected in the same way while learning Spanish in Mexico? Living in Mexico for three years surely requires certain degrees of language competency, but May did not suffer a sense of inferiority as she had in the UK. As I mentioned earlier, English is made distinguishable from other languages because of its international features. People can survive internationally without speaking Spanish, but speaking no English, people will have limited mobility. Due to its international features, English almost becomes one of the intellectual list in which people (un)consciously compete. Better English brings better opportunities (a real experience of English language learners, see Norton, 2000) no matter how competent you were in your original country. Even though we could all speak English before we came to the UK, the different accent, phonology, phraseology and syntax of British English made us struggle at the beginning of our stay. We had all gone through that difficult time when we withdrew into ourselves, preventing us from doing what we were capable of, especially in terms of work. This was not only May's personal struggle, but also ours. Our identity transformations had occurred right from the moment that we started to lose our confidence owing to our dissatisfaction with our language proficiency and the reaction from people.

Language proficiency, self confidence and identity

The finding of a quantitative study about self-confidence with English ('which is defined by high self-ratings of English proficiency and the absence of anxiety when speaking English (Pak et al., 1985, p. 369)') amongst Chinese students in Canada affirms our experiences in which 'self-confidence with English was positively related to *linguistic* assimilation', and ' to self-esteem, perceived control over one's life, and satisfaction with life in Toronto' (Pak et al., 1985, pp. 376-377). For Chinese students who were an ethno-linguistic minority in Canada, from the researcher's point of view, 'confidence with the majority group's language should be accompanied by a greater feeling of personal efficacy' (Pak et al., 1985, p. 370). Interestingly, this study discovered that the correlation between self-confidence and English proficiency does not necessarily relate to cultural assimilation. Those Chinese students did not 'lose' their distinctive cultural identity as a result of learning English.

Similarly, Young and Gardner (1990) conducted a quantitative study regarding the association between language proficiency and acculturation amongst members of the Chinese community in Canada. They demonstrated that 'while proficiency is closely linked with a sense of identity, identification with the second language community does not necessarily imply assimilation (p. 70)'. Unfortunately, this study does not explicate the relation between language proficiency, identity and acculturation in depth, but the one thing they discovered caught my eye that 'individuals who... are competent in English do not feel marginal to either culture... This suggests that these individuals feel fairly secure in their identity' (Young & Gardner, 1990, p. 67).

Both studies lay great stress on the correlation between language proficiency and linguistic/cultural assimilation, but pay less attention to that of self confidence with language proficiency and identity. Nevertheless, their results assure me that our loss of self confidence not only with English, but also in believing in ourselves, is not an unusual situation. Now, our writings will present you with a more nuanced in depth account that cannot be seen in a quantitative study.

開始要找工作
我的恐懼就來
因爲自認爲英文還未達到一個標準
怎麼能去工作呢？
但硬著頭皮還是去面試
雖然順利通過第一關
但其實那根本不算什麼
痛苦的開始
是開始上班那一天

My fear mounted
when I began to look for a job.
How could I work when I thought
my English had not been good
enough?
But I still squared up to the interview.
Although I passed,
compared to what was going to
happen,
the interview was nothing.
The agony was beginning
from the first day of work.

第一次
在教授面前
被要求打電話訂實驗儀器
當時心裏最在意的
其實是教授的反應
這是一種對"說英文"
自信心不足的表現
那時覺得講出 100%"正確"的英文
才是"speaking English"
但太在乎別人對自己講英文的反應
反而使自己無法表達清楚目的爲何
因爲總是花時間在思考"用字"
而非對談的內容
自己很累
對方很 confused, I guess

For the first time,
I was asked to make a phone call
in front of my supervisor
to order equipment.
The thing I cared about the most then
was
my supervisor's reaction.
This was caused by my lack of
confidence
in 'speaking English'
I thought speaking 100% 'accurate'
English was really 'speaking English'.
Caring too much about people's
reactions
made me not able to clearly express
myself.
Because I always spent time to
'choose words'

rather than to think of the content of
our conversation.
I felt tired and
people were confused, I guess.

工作上最困難的是
與病人的電話對談
曾有不客氣的病人
因爲我的口音
知道我不是當地人
直接說不要跟我講話
要找其他人
這些打擊
有時會讓我好想逃避
但只是短暫
面對它克服它才是必要
在新的環境裡
跟當地人要打成一片是不簡單的事
當同事在聊生活銷（瑣）事時
也不是太能打入她（們）的話題中
花了有一年多時間
才能夠很自然的打／接電話
或是與其他人輕鬆閒聊

The most difficult thing at work was
having a conversation with patients
on the phone.
Some impolite patients
heard my accent and
realised I am not local,
they refused to talk to me on the
phone and
asked for other staff.
Such a blow
made me want to escape,
but it's just temporary.
Facing and overcoming it is a
necessity.
In a new environment,
It's not easy to get involved locally.
When my colleagues were chatting,
I felt difficult about joining them.
Not until one year later,
I could pick up/make the phone calls
naturally
or comfortably chatted with others.

In this section, I will use the pronoun – 's/he', and the possessive 'her/is' to represent the collective Taiwanese in our group, for our experiences were not only individually available to each of us but also communally shared with each other (perhaps, even with other Taiwanese outside the group) in different circumstances. At the same time, the 'I' will remain as me, the researcher here.

S/he lacked confidence in speaking English, to be precise, speaking 'correct' English. Whether s/he was a student or a non-student, s/he had all come across certain embarrassing moments in which s/he was challenged by people and her/is own worries.

S/he indeed spoke English. Perhaps s/he was not speaking perfectly, even with a strange accent that English speakers may not understand, but surely it is sufficient to allow her/im to live a life in the UK. S/he had experienced a number of dreadful moments that took her/is heart away from the spirit of the UK, and moreover, these experiences broke her/im down from time to time. When the patients refused to talk to her/im on the phone, I almost could see her/is face turning green[24] and almost could hear the crash of her/im shattering confidence. This was definitely one of the devastating moments for her/im. On the one hand, it perhaps sounded like an insult, but on the other, I could imagine how unpleasant and difficult it must be for the local to understand a foreign accent, especially if the elderly had no experience of having any contact with people like her/im. In addition to people's unfriendly reactions, her/is own thought of having to be correct and perfect was one of the factors that shattered her/is confidence. This led to various negative emotions, such as, pressure, depression and withdrawal. The emotional strain may cause interference, suggests Luzio-Lockett (1998, p. 215), 'as emotions take over the control of one's linguistic utterances'. All the above suggests that assimilating into a different language and culture always causes a lot of frustration, even for her/is own free will. S/he was in fact not fulfilled with an aimless life in the UK, and surprisingly s/he was not put off by the low confidence with English and those embarrassing experiences. S/he could have chosen an easy way to live within a Taiwanese (or even Chinese) community in the UK, but s/he squared up to the challenging life. I am wondering what kept her/im trying. Let me take Heller's words as an example of what s/he insisted on doing.

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[24] It is a Taiwanese expression meaning that she felt insulted and speechless.

'Thus the first principle of ethnic identity formation is participation in ethnic social networks, and therefore in activities controlled by ethnic group members. Language is important here as a means by which access to networks is regulated: If you do not speak the right language, you do not have access to forming relationships with certain people, or to participating in certain activities.' (cited in Norton, 2000, p. 12)

Being a part of the composition of 'her/im', I can see her/is longing for the acceptance into the English community and, to some extent, self realisation in language assimilation. In spite of unpleasant experiences, the enhancement of English and improvement in assimilating into the English community strengthened her/im. Her/is stories may be unique to 'the group of her/im', but the common element I extract from her/is writings here was by no means unfamiliar to many of the second language learners (for more stories and examples, see Norton, 2000).

這種情況慢慢進展到
她們說的你都聽的懂了
但你卻因爲反應比較慢而插不上嘴
這時候也只能聽她們說
只是心裡會納悶
我又不笨
生活經驗也不比你們少
但我就是輸在語言不夠強

This situation had slowly progressed
that
you understood what they said,
but you could not react promptly.
You could only listen to them and
know in your mind that
'I am not stupid,
my lived experiences are not less than
you guys'.
I was only being left behind in the
aspect of using the language.

至於現在
好像又到了另一個階段
笑話聽的懂
插話也插的上嘴
但我現在想變成說笑話的那個人！
希望不久後我能完全掌握英語
就像我說中文一樣溜囉！

As for now,
it seems to come to another stage
I understand the jokes.
I can react promptly.
But I want to be the person who tells
a joke.
Hope I can fully master English,
and speak English as fluently as my
Chinese.

這一切改變是在
２年之後
在我視英文
只是一種溝通的工具 only...
雖然還是無法像 native speaker 一樣運用
自如...
認清一個事實
that is, I am not a native speaker....
And learn to be proud of my Taiwanese accent.

雖然到現在依然
沒辦法 100%用英文表達自己的想法
但因爲心態改變
我覺得就算英文不完美
也再不怕去跟人家溝通
語言只是一個工具
真心真意去跟人溝通
對方還是會懂的

語言是溝通的工具之一
這些領悟多是在我們對語言
有一定程度的掌控之後
伴隨著對語言能力的增強
自信心也會增加
對於語言之於自信的部份
我沒有結論

Two years later.
Since I regarded English
as a communicative tool only,
all the things have changed.
Even though I still can't speak English like
native speakers,
I have recognised a fact,
that is, I am not a native speaker
and have learned to be proud of my Taiwanese accent.

So far, I still can't
use English to fully express my thoughts.
Because of the change of thoughts and attitudes,
I am not afraid of communicating with people,
even though my English is not perfect.
Language is just a tool.
People will understand,
if I communicate with them in all sincerity.

Language is one of the communicative tools.
We come to understand this idea,
after we have a good grip on the language.
Along with an increase in
competence in the language,
you will build up self confidence.
I have no conclusion about
language in relation to self confidence

S/he really wanted to acquire English as much and as fast as s/he could. Speaking good English not only offered a better opportunity at work, but also expanded

her/is social network. S/he was eager to get access to the English community and hoped to be making connections with British people. S/he knew that s/he could not always expect people to accommodate her/im, so that s/he chose to adjust her/im-self to the new world. The improvement in English made her/im gain more confidence in what s/he did in the UK. I am certainly not ascribing all the influence to language proficiency. Of course it should be considered along with other factors, i.e. aging, having more lived experience in relation to the host country, acculturating, moving from one stage of life to another (for instance, from a girl to a wife, a wife to a mum, or a student to a professional) and the incidents happening in her/is life. Making progress in English is usually accompanied by better familiarity with the local environment, the working environment, people, and the culture. In reading her/is writing, I can almost sense that the social activity, even chatting, could be one kind of imperceptible contest, in a positive sense though. S/he wanted to be compatible and competitive with English speakers, but at the same time, s/he realised that language is merely a communicative device. Communication is a two-way, interactive and reciprocal activity. When s/he was not making sense, British people felt embarrassed about not being able to understand, or felt rude asking her/im to repeat. Therefore, the conversation/ communication ceased at this point. Similarly, s/he may feel her/im-self annoyed or bothered by interrupting the smooth flow of other's speaking. It was not difficult to pretend that s/he understood, and yet, the conversation would not go far by ways of guessing what each other says, leading to half understanding/misunderstanding. Misunderstanding or half understanding of language, especially cultural language[25],

[25] By cultural language, I mean those that are related to culturally based things, such as names, places,

happens from time to time, but decreases along the length of time of stay in the UK. The gap between English speakers and non-English speakers which is caused by misunderstanding, however, can be ranged from a crack to beyond the width that one can cross over, depending on how confident people can be in themselves.

Different languages foster different logic and different modes of thinking and behaviour. The difference between one language and another can be too significant for people to understand each other, especially crossing a massive continent from the East to the West. During her/is early stay, her/is mind was fully occupied, having determined to assimilate into the English language/culture/community. S/he almost forgot the fact that s/he had her/is unique thinking system in her/is mother tongue. S/he knew that language is merely a communicative device in her/is heart all along. Not until s/he got familiar with the surroundings and people, did s/he take the concept into play. S/he was desperate to become one of them, with the result that s/he strayed away from remembering who s/he was, how s/he behaved as a decent person and how s/he formed her/is thinking system. Notwithstanding, s/he seemed to remain the same person while s/he spoke Chinese/Taiwanese or while s/he was with people who spoke her/is language. Although the thought of language being merely a device (plus getting certain degrees of language proficiency) dr ew her/im back from the lost self, everything had already changed in a way that s/he was not who s/he really was in Taiwan. It was not the language per se, but the confidence in language that had changed the way s/he valued and evaluated her/im-self, in which some characters had been distilled from and some into her/is inner state. These characters vary from person to person in a subtle way, so

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songs, locally historical symbols and local slang that people have to be involved in the community long

that I am not able to identify them at all. S/he did not clearly identify any of the characters either, but eventually s/he figured out that the attitude towards communication and relationship between people was way more important than language proficiency. This self finding for me, however, is tentative. Without making noticeable progress in English, s/he will not be able to boost her/is confidence enough to get rid of tears of self-pity.

工作上的語言能力
讓你對自己的信心
產生一定的影響
許多在台灣工作過的人
來了ＵＫ會自動降階層
做比較基層的工作
不是因爲沒有能力
而是對語言掌握度不高造成的
似乎語言能力對我們在海外求職時
造成相當大的心理障礙
甚至影響到自身的專業表現

Proficiency in language, at work,
has a certain level of impact
towards self confidence.
Many people who had worked in
Taiwan
will lower their expectations in the
UK,
doing a basic level of job.
It's not because of incapability,
but of less grip on the language.
It seems that while we seek jobs
abroad
the proficiency in language
causes quite a hurdle in our minds
It even affects our professional
performance.

Apart from language, cultural difference is one of the main factors that has a huge impact on identity transformation. Language and culture are interrelated, intertwined, tangled and inseparable, so are the consequences they cause. Even so, with the nuance that may not be distinguished easily, I will try to expand on the difference of the impacts that these two factors result in. According to her/is experience, lower language proficiency decreased her/is confidence in language, and made her/im-self an

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enough to be able to acquire it.

inferior individual as a result. By speaking less English, s/he had limited opportunities when searching for a job. This made her/im start to doubt her ability, not only in language, but also in her/is particular expertise during the early part of her/is stay in the UK, even if this was followed by improvement in English, together with enthusiasm for gulping linguistic knowledge, boosting her confidence and esteem up to the position that s/he used to have dwelling in a society. Being incapable of doing the job that s/he used to do in her/is first language denoted a loss of her/is esteem, but nevertheless s/he may be underestimating her/is ability in English in advance of searching for a job. In this sense, language proficiency affects self-evaluation. Since language fosters the logic of thoughts, it can hardly be subverted in a short time. A second language may at times have stirred up her/is logic of thoughts, but the subversion to her/is original belief was unsuccessful nonetheless. Acting as a communicative device, language did not change the way s/he evaluated the world but the way s/he evaluated her/im-self. It was British culture and living in it that changed her/is view on evaluation of the community, the society and the world. Without a shadow of a doubt, her/is interaction with English speakers changed her/is stereotypical impression of them. It may or may not have slightly changed her/is view on people or the society, but had reversed the condemnation of others back to doubting her/is own competence in general. Language did not turn her/im inside out in terms of life style and general opinions that may be caused by culture in this sense.

Unlike Ariana, a Chinese looking Canadian who spoke only English in Kouritzin's (1999) research on first language loss, s/he did not have a radical identity crisis. Her/is speaking English with a stammer and hesitation was predictable. Learning

a second language at an adult age, rather than from childhood, failed her/im to succeed in making a life as s/he wanted, but on the other hand, it reduced the possibility of first language loss. Having lived in the UK for over five years, I had experienced the shifting of two languages. Without using Chinese often, especially in writing, as time goes by there are more and more Chinese words and phrases escaping me, but I do not deem it a language loss. The bond between Taiwan and myself is strong enough for me to refresh my memory of my mother tongue.

Writing and identity

So far, I have written about the content of our writings and both the result and process of our discussion, but I would like to switch my attention to the concept of our writings. This research project was conducted in Chinese, but inevitably a few English words, even sentences, were mixed up in our Chinese writing. Some of those English words were untranslatable notions, while some of the words revealed that we did not make too much effort to write completely Chinese. Since we had to use English in our daily lives, a few phrases in English seemed more familiar to us than those in Chinese. In addition, a few English words have been shifted away from their original meaning and usage in a Taiwanese context, and therefore have been endowed with the new meaning that only Taiwanese people (perhaps Chinese speakers) recognise. The English alphabet is also very useful when we forget how to write Chinese characters. There is nothing wrong with English words mixing with Chinese writing as long as it makes sense. This particular way of writing and thinking discloses how two completely different languages can make our mind complicated and chaotic.

經由我們兩次的會議
我也發現一件好玩的事
與會人士的經驗各自不同
但"感覺"卻都很雷同
是真的語言對人所產生的影響這麼接近
還是我們經由經驗的交換
彼此會自動"修飾"原本的想法
讓對方更能認同自己？

I found something interesting
in these two workshops,
participants' experiences varied,
but their 'feelings' were very similar.
Was it the impact of language on
people so close to each other?
Or through our exchanges of
experience,
we 'tweaked' our original thoughts
to make others agree with us?

In our collective biography workshops, we were encouraged to tell our stories but were not told to whom we wrote. In fact, many of our writings were not purely stories, but some sort of self-talking. Even though we realised that the writings were to be read out loud in the group, there were moments that we (perhaps just I?) were not sure whether we were writing to ourselves or to each other. People tend to write in a more honest and poignant way to themselves than to others. By having an audience in our mind, we, to some extent, tweaked our thoughts from time to time to make the writing more identified and acceptable within the group. I am not suggesting that we all told fake or wrong versions of our stories, but somehow it was like a chain reaction in our group. They were all instructed about the theme of what we were going to discuss in each workshop, but unfortunately they always struggled to make a start on their stories. It may be owing to the lack of a specific story, or perhaps they were tentative because of my too open instructions on story selections. Whatever the reason was, I had been expected to demonstrate what stories I was expecting in each workshop. Forcibly telling my story before everyone took the pressure off them, but it acted almost like a trigger of this chain reaction. One story evoked another (Pinkola Estes, 1993). This may

be one of the reasons that we had the same feeling, as May observed. Now those different stories happened to us, but the identical feeling was the origin of those mysterious common elements that I want to focus on. In order to create a collective voice, which may consist in common elements, I deliberately, and to some extent unavoidably, inte rmingle each person's writing and m y email correspondence wit h participants together.

Writing, to us, is not only the data that I want to collect for this project, but also a device that provides a good opportunity for us to articulate our thoughts and opinions. In contrast to the usual way that people disclose themselves (un)intentionally through both their oral expression and interacting with others, writing represents part of our identities. People may be recognised as one person when speaking, but as a different person when writing. During our workshops, participants spent more time discussing the topic, but writing still provided a vehicle to carry the unsaid and not yet said. In our case, the writing was, somehow, the product of our discussion. It was not necessarily a neutral summary of our discussion or a final story of our own. It seemed to be a result of the instant and space between our writing and thinking diverting our senses to a different level. There is no evidence to prove that we have contradictory identities while writing differently, but time and space between thinking and writing allowed tacit knowledge to be known.

Writing in different languages seems to represent the different sides of me. I would be fascinated to know how others perceive the difference between writing in two languages, and how it affects their identities. Since writing in both languages was not one of our themes, neither was discussion of writing, I will have to speak from my own

experience. In general, while writing in Chinese, I can be witty, humorous and play the words out of the fun side of me. Unfortunately, due to the English I learn (we all learn this way) I write in English as if I was a demure lady. Not only does speaking English make me feel limited, but also writing. Even though writing allows me more time and space to think over what I am going to express, insufficient knowledge of English (including the amount of vocabulary, feelings for words, and those cultural languages) refrains me from accurately expressing who I am. Language, either of writing or of speaking, can be seen as the most important vehicle for conveying one's personality to people. I am still who I am, but it always feels to me that there is about ten to twenty percent of me missing in English. Does writing in English change my identity? It is likely to change after a long period of time due to the different logic that the two languages are based on. For now, writing does not possess a strong power to change our identities unless we constantly write (in either language).

Tentative findings

語言真的佔了這麼重要的一部分嗎？
怎麼好像在我們討論完後
似乎語言的因素並不那麼大
沒錯語言是個工具
我們只是應用這個工具去溝通
重點還是人與人之間情感上的交流
但不可否認的是
沒有溝通的工具
人和人要如何了解彼此？
而且這個溝通的工具
大大影響了我們對自己的看法、自信

Is language that important?
It seems that after our discussion,
language is not as prominent as we
thought
Language indeed is just a tool.
We apply this tool to communicate.
The most important thing is the
interrelationship between people.
But without a doubt, how can people
understand each other
without the communicative tool?
This communicative tool also
considerably affects our confidence
and how we see ourselves.

From our writing, language seemed not to be the most troublesome factor that influenced our identities. The unsuccessful language assimilation breaks one's self confidence and leads to ruining one's life in many ways. Along side making progress in language proficiency, however, we can gain strength and resilience to get our lives and confidence back. It is so easy to misinterpret shattered confidence as identity deconstruction, because individuals will feel that they are not the same persons as they were. The fact of not being the same person cannot be attributed to language assimilation only. Many other factors have to be taken into account. From all of our stories in relation to language, losing self confidence leads to striving to boost our confidence back, rather than deconstructing our identities, even though this may exert an impact on our identities. We will have to go through the cycle of emotional collapse and resilience, but the length of time varies from person to person. In a previous chapter, we have begun to overturn my initial assumption of identity transformation to consider it as shifting identity over time. It is not until we gain our self confidence back to certain level that we will start to be aware of our shifting identities. However, by the time we gain our confidence back, our identities have shifted away from what they were, so that we are confused about whether it is the language or other factors that cause the shifting.

Whereas applied linguistics lays the stress on language (in relation to the human), I place the stress on the human (in relation to language). Language proficiency directly affects not our identity, but the way we express ourselves. We cannot express certain parts of ourselves properly due to the lack of language. Non-Chinese speakers may perceive us slightly differently from who we thought we are, and this may cause

the reverse effect for us. If we lay the stress on language, surely our perspective will be diverted to seeing language as a powerful influence on our identities. But alternatively, if we lay the stress on the human, we then view the whole process from a different angle and at the same time empower humans to master language as a tool. In this sense, language may exert its power on our diasporic identity, yet it is not as great as the effects all other factors may have.

Winter, 2009, working in the minibus with children

'$%^&*$%^&...' the 10-year-old[26] spoke in a casual and quiet voice along with the loud rattling sound of the battered minibus. I could not hear what he said properly.

'Pardon?' I said loudly and made sure he heard me.

'Forget it, you don't know anything,' he looked at me in annoyance and replied rudely.

Oh, Come on, not again. I thought. He was in a grumpy mood.

'Pete, I've told you that you need to speak louder as the bus is very noisy. I can't hear you properly,' I said with patience.

'CAN YOU HEAR ME NOW!?' He shouted rudely.

'Yes, I can and you don't have to shout,' I replied calmly but looked at him sharply. I could feel the repression of anger underneath my soft voice.

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[26] He was the 8-year-old boy I mentioned earlier in p.101 in this chapter.

'EXACTLY!' He still shouted out and stared back.

'You are being rude, Pete.' I was still calm.

'BECAUSE YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND ANYTHING!'

'You didn't speak properly, Pete.'

'I SPEAK BETTER ENGLISH!' He was getting on my nerves now.

I secretly took a deep breath.

'Yes, you do. Pete. But it doesn't mean you can speak rudely to people.' I was still calm, but wondered can I calm him down by just acknowledging him.

'I DON'T CARE!'

I decided to leave him alone for few minutes. This was not the first time he had attacked me for my English. Five minutes later, he looked a little calm. I spoke to him in a gentle and firm voice.

'Pete, I am not gonna talk about this thing again. I just want you to know that you are a big boy, and I am sure you know what you can do and what you can't do. You are clever, think about it. There was something that you could have done to make things better but you didn't. Think, what could it be? I am sure you will work it out.'

He just looked out of the window without saying any words. I had no idea what he made of my words, but at least he had calmed down.

His younger brother and I kept talking about other things, and suddenly Pete joined in our conversation, so naturally and happily, as if the argument earlier had never happened.

I smiled in my heart and felt impressed with what I had just achieved. This was such a simple task that I could not have achieved by using English two years ago. But now, I regained the control of myself, finally. I smiled.

CHAPTER YELLOW – CULTURE AND IDENTITY

Winter, 2006, my flat on Beaufort Road

I was standing in front of the cooker in the kitchen where I shared with two girls. The chopped garlic in the frying pan had turned golden and was waiting for strips of pork to share the delicious aroma and to make the sizzling sound again. Broccoli heads were on the table beside the cooker waiting to finish a simple unnameable Taiwanese dish. It was a quick dinner for me and an English friend, Joe who was invited for Taiwanese style of cooking. He had just arrived and popped into the kitchen and stole one floret of uncooked broccoli. I watched him eating the uncooked broccoli and was amazed by the scene of him eating 'raw' vegetable.

We were chatting casually when Stephanie, a German girl who was one of my flatmates, came to prepare her dinner. She took a loaf of bread and cut it into slices.

'Do you eat bread for dinner?' I asked.

'Yes,' she replied and felt it to be strange why I asked so.

'Really? How weird! Bread is for breakfast!' I suddenly burst into laughing.

Joe and Stephanie were looking at me unbelievingly and were speechless.

The next day, I regretted so much about what I had said when I thought retrospectively of my reaction last night. My attitude was so rude to them. I of course knew that bread is one of the starchy foods massively consumed in Europe at

whichever meal. Why the hell had I forgotten? Perhaps I just wanted to impress Joe and put it in a completely wrong way?

A few days later, in the morning, Stephanie happened to come into the kitchen while I was cooking noodles for my 'breakfast'. This was one of those days that I was fed up with having bread, jam, milk, cereal and so on as my breakfast. She came in and saw me putting vegetables and noodles in the sauce pan.

'What are you cooking Lin?' asked Stephanie.

'Noodle soup,' I said sheepishly.

'Noodle soup for breakfast?' Her eyes wide opened.

'I know...' I felt a bit embarrassed.

Stephanie grinned.

Food, culture and embodiment

Why is food so important to us? Apart from language, music, literature, fashion, film and the media, food is another significant feature that represents the specificity of a culture. Taste in food varies from country to country. How/What/Where/When you eat distinguishes you and people from different cultures. Nowadays, 'anthropologists are far more likely to approach food as an index to culture,... in the sense of particular cultures and ethnicities' (Delaney, 2004, p. 274). For Taiwanese people, our cultural

heritage is strongly bound up with Mainland China. I am impressed by Anderson's precise statement of Chinese eating:

> 'Chinese use food to mark ethnicity, culture change, calendric and family events, and social transactions. No business deal is complete without a dinner. No family visit is complete without sharing a meal. No major religious event is correctly done without offering up special foods proper to the ritual context' (1988, p. 244).

His precise description of the association between food and culture elaborates the importance of food to us. Chinese usage of food may be an extreme example of culinary culture. Nonetheless, 'food and eating can be analytically productive foci in the examination of multicultural dynamics, since they serve to highlight forms of social organization and disorganization by upsetting fundamental binaries of public/private, inside/outside and local/global' (Gunaratnam, 2001, p. 288). In this sense, food not only represents the significance of a culture, but also constructs people's identities within a culture.

Food is given a meaning far beyond its survival level and is intensely bound up with identity, religiously, nationally and ethnically (Civitello, 2008). The relationship between food and identity is not being simply produced by ethnic, cultural and religious factors, 'but also by attempts to negotiate changing identifications, desires, knowledge and bodies within particular contexts' (Gunaratnam, 2001, p. 301). This particular context in our case refers to our diasporic life in which we always have to negotiate changing identity, displacement of our embodied experience, and a longing for home. 'The longing evoked in diasporic individuals by the smells and tastes of a lost homeland provides a temporary return to a time when their lives were not fragmented' (Holtzman, 2006, p. 367). The association between taste and place contains a dimension

of nostalgia which extends beyond 'a taste memory for certain foods and drinks of a region, but also for a certain way of life' (Trubek, 2005, p. 268).

The food issue appeared while we were arranging our workshops. I felt that I owed them a great deal of appreciation for their voluntary participation. On the one hand, due to my own financial struggle, Taiwanese food supplies were the only thing and the best thing that I could offer on this occasion. On the other hand, I was hoping that Taiwanese foods could be vehicles for connecting with a past, not necessarily a lost past, but a memorised past (Holtzman, 2006), because 'the experience of food evokes recollection, which is not simply cognitive but also emotional and physical' (p. 365). While I asked my participants in email what kind of food they liked to have during our workshops. They made a long list of the most popular Taiwanese savoury snacks (for teasing and joking only) which I would not be able to make without the correct ingredients, proper equipment, related knowledge and particular skills. We may easily get Chinese food and snacks in the Chinese supermarket and restaurant, but unfortunately no hand-made Taiwanese savoury snacks could be found in any of those restaurants and shops. The inconvenience (or even impossibility) of obtaining Taiwanese foods makes us miss the taste and the smell of those specific foods more. 'Sensuality of eating transmits powerful mnemonic cues, principally through smells and tastes' (Holtzman, 2006, p. 373). This is the taste of homeland, the smell of memory (Sutton, 2005). We may not eat those food everyday in Taiwan, but they are always available in the stalls whenever we want.

I wanted to create an atmosphere that brought them home to Taiwan in a way that they could, on the one hand, feel at home and comfortable to share their unique

experiences; on the other hand, I hoped to contrast the Taiwanese atmosphere within the room where our workshops took place and the outer English world. Unfortunately, I failed to fulfil our gastronomic desire for Taiwanese food due to the lack of ingredients, equipment, skills and above all, technology. Those Taiwanese savoury snacks are supposed to be eaten hot. Once they become cold, they lose their essence and taste. The most important thing is that they lose the evocation of home and memory (Sutton, 2005). There were no ways to keep the food hot for our all-day workshops, and, anyway, the smell might fill the meeting room where there was no food allowed. In the first workshop, I had difficulties preparing proper Taiwanese food, and it contained the most number of participants. I missed the best opportunity to bring back the feeling for home. From the second workshop onward, I made an effort to prepare handmade food as close to Taiwanese savoury snacks as I could. Funnily enough, the food did not attract so much attention as I expected. Was it because the food did not evoke any memory or feeling of homeland? Or was it because they deemed the workshop a formal research occasion on which the discussion about food was not expected, even when two workshops were in actual fact conducted in my massive 'bedroom'? Or was it my rubbish cooking skill ruining it? Or was it that Carina and Daniel were so familiar with me that we had so much to catch up on other than food? Or was this concept of food actually my own personal obsession?

這裡的天氣、食物、文化
只要不要要求太多
就可以讓自己很容易滿足
特別是吃的
對於來自 Tropical

As long as you don't ask for too much,
you can be satisfied easily with
the weather, food and culture here,
especially food.
I am from a tropical island
and care too much about gourmet

和講究美食的我
第一年因爲吃和天氣
可以讓自己的心情變得很不好
and very depressing,
But now I have changed,
I am more satisfied
because I don't even think too much about it.

在台灣大家吃的都是中國菜
即使吃西餐
也是改良過符合台灣人口味的西餐
但在英國待了這幾年
雖然大多數時候我還是煮中餐
但對西餐的接受度是越來越高
也因爲西餐做法簡易
所以我現在煮西餐的次數是越來越多
現在吃完飯一定要吃點甜食來結尾
這當然是英國飲食的引(影)響啦

到英國飲食最大的改變
應該是中午的那餐吧
跟英國人一樣的三明治跟飲料都無所謂
但是就是還不能接受吃那樣冷中餐
還有要再加吃薯片才算是完整的一餐
對於中式餐點的標準也降低了

food.
Because of the food and the weather,
I felt down so much
and very depressed in the first year.
But now I have changed,
I am more satisfied
because I don't even think too much
about it

People eat Chinese dishes in Taiwan.
The food is adjusted to be in tune
with Taiwanese tastes,
even though it's called western
cuisine.
Through out these years in the UK,
I cooked Chinese food most of the
time,
but I accepted western food better
than before.
Because western cuisine is easy,
now I frequently make western meals.
Now I must finish a meal with
pudding.
This is the impact of English diet.

Lunch is the meal that has been
mostly changed in the UK for me.
I don't mind having sandwiches and
drinks like British people,
but I still can't accept a cold lunch.
A full lunch must contain crisps.
My standard for a Chinese meal has
lowered

Instead of talking about Taiwanese food directly in our workshops, s/he told the changes of eating habit s/he had for these years. At the beginning of her/is stay, s/he could get upset easily because of the unfamiliar food and weather. Taiwanese food could soothe her/is homesickness, whether it was homemade or a ready made meal. S/he certainly cooked Chinese cuisine most of the time, because this is what s/he

learned from mothers, from homes, from her/is culture since being small. Food and the familiar way of cooking, however, did not completely comfort her/im in a way that eating/preparing alone and eating/preparing in company with people endow the task of cooking with different meanings. (What is not presented in her/is writing, was the discussion we had when we were all eating those foods, *together*, at break even though the processes of food preparation were missing.) The difference between eating on your own and eating together with people, even with the same food, is surprisingly huge not just in physical terms, but also in the emotional aspect. Eating together with people from her/is culture immediately provoked a surge of happiness and, unreasonably, sentiment. In this sense, foods can be seen as 'signs in a system of communication' (Roland Barthes, [1957] 1972:63), and at the same time, 'eating together lies at the heart of social relations' (Counihan 1999:6) (both are cited in Delaney, 2004, p. 274).

Food and eating not only play an important role in social relations, but also inwardly exert a strong impact on ourselves. Lupton (2005, p. 317) emphasizes that 'food and eating are central to our subjectivity, or sense of self, and our experience of embodiment, or the ways that we live in and through our bodies, which itself is inextricably linked with subjectivity'. Although it may be slightly exaggerated from my point of view, without a doubt, the change of food and eating is said to contribute to our subjectivity, identity, personal lives and social interactions, profoundly, and what is more food, as Deutsch (cited in Gingras & Tiro, 2008, p. 396) suggested, 'tells stories of migration, assimilation, and resistance, changes over time, and personal and group identity'.

Tiro's cultural food narrative is echoed by her/is experience of changing food habits: 'In an effort to ease transition into a new environment, the prevailing food habits are replaced by new ones. However, food habits are dynamic and interactive, changing from one context to another' (Gingras & Tiro, 2008, p. 387). S/he reluctantly (perhaps unconsciously) changed her/is taste as time went by. The longer s/he lived in the UK, the less s/he expected of Taiwanese food. In reality, it was geographically and politically impossible to obtain the ingredients s/he may need on the one hand; and s/he had accustomed her/imself to western cuisine due to the constraints of agricultural products and culinary history, on the other. 'As Roland Barthes has argued "food has a constant tendency to transform itself into situation" (1979:171)' (Probyn, 1999, p. 217). Food itself is not the agency, but a vehicle. People who utilize it and have relationship with it are those who transform food into situations. The role of food in various forms of nostalgia embodied people's memories and culture, and furthermore, the remembering and forgetting through smell and taste (Sutton, 2005) firm up the relationship between the human body and food. These relationships include not only 'embodied memories constructed through food' (Holtzman, 2006, p. 364), but also the present existence of food transformed in the new context. Therefore, the relationship between human beings and food is not just by word of mouth, but embodied. Her/is change of accepting Western cuisine much more than s/he used to be, and of finishing a meal with dessert, and even of not completing a lunch without crisps, highlight the embodiment of the relationship between the human body and food. 'Because human beings are embodied, certain aspects of personal and cultural identity are readily defined by and revealed through the body' (Furman et al., 2005, p. 129). Thus, her/is

identity is, in a sense, constructed through embodied experiences – her/is lived experiences within the body and through food. Furthermore, 'manipulation of identity through embracing the food habits of 'other' can result in the appropriation not only of culture, but of power' (Gingras & Tiro, 2008, p. 386). In her/is case, obtaining the food habits of the 'other' may occur with reluctance, but unavoidably, the appropriation of culture and of power are rendered interpersonal and intra-personal by which her/is desire for food of the 'other' almost manipulates part of her/is behaviour, belief, emotion and personal life. The different food habits are still shifting in her/im, so that the mixture of her/is food habits is never stable and fixed. The instability offers the space for her/im to examine the embodied experience through food and the appropriation of culture and of power. For as Roland Barthes states, 'food is always "bound to values of power" (1971:171)' (Probyn, 1999, p. 217).

Environment and space

Following on from food, I would like to draw attention to the seemingly fixed but yet actually fluid factor – space. Geographical features and political relations are not the only possibilities for its meaning. Space is not necessarily referred to as a physical character when Massey states that 'we recognise space as the product of interrelations, as constituted through interactions' (Massey, 2005, p. 9). From her proposition of space, the symbol has been broadened beyond its limit. Not only do those physical features of land take us from one country to another, but also the climate change that a map cannot display brings us to the embodied experiences. Both of these are the most prominent features of living away from home whereby the geographical

surroundings and the weather could result in different cultural milieus. At the same time, this kind of dislocation could open up a political sense of discussion between people from different cultures, and, appropriating Derrida's point, the chaos and instability that is caused by dislocation can be 'at once a risk and a chance' (Massey, 2005, p. 151). The chaos and instability may happen in the external world as well as the internal world within human beings. A risk will lead to collapse while a chance may result in construction. It takes us back to Massey's other proposition of space in which we take space as always under construction, always in the process of being made (Massey, 2005). In this sense, despite the fact that the continual intersection of construction and collapse may lead to shaking up our 'previous' identities (which may have been formed within a single culture), the directly embodied relationships between human beings and places, landscapes, cities, and the weather not only bring different values of many aspects into play, but also reconstruct people's identities.

2002 年第一天來到英國的時候	The first day I arrived in the UK in 2002
是盛夏七月底	It was July in summer
我一下飛機就覺得涼	I felt chilly as soon as I got off the plane.
那種台灣秋天才感受的到的涼意	You only had the chilly feeling in Autumn, in Taiwan.
當下覺得	I then thought
英國夏天的氣溫只有不到二十度	the temperature was only 20 degrees in summer in the UK
那冬天我該怎麼生存？	How can I survive in winter?
現在與剛來時比起來已經好很多了	Now I'm much better
去年十二月我回了台灣一趟	I went back to Taiwan last December
當時我帶回去的通通都是冬衣	and brought winter clothes at that time.
我在台灣根本穿不上	I could not wear them in Taiwan at
因爲那溫度跟英國夏天的溫度差不多	

所以我每天都覺得熱
也只能穿上夏天的短袖上衣
第一次意識到自己'開始'適應英國氣候，
對台灣的氣候反而有些不適應。

all.
The temperature was similar to that of English summer.
I felt hot everyday,
and could only put summer clothes on.
This was the first awareness of 'having started' to become accustomed to the weather in the UK.
Contrarily, I felt unaccustomed to the weather in Taiwan.

在英國，天氣瞬息萬變
天氣差時
心情就跟著差
天氣好
心情也跟著好
很容易受影響啊！

The weather changes instantly in the UK
When the weather is bad,
my mood turns bad.
When the weather is good,
my mood turns good.
It's so easy to be affected.

I was amazed how the weather and geographical factors were involved in her/is writing whereas I had anticipated daily encounters with human beings more than the relationship with the static geographical factors to be present. (In practice, the weather and topography are certainly not static. It is, however, relatively static when compared with dynamic human beings.) Her/is writing about the weather and the landscape highlighted the relationship between space and human beings, and, in addition, provided an opportunity for the locals to rethink the mundane, the accustomed surroundings. 'The 'locals' are not always 'right', nor is abiding by their majority opinion always the most democratic course to adopt. 'Defence of a local way of life' can likewise cut both ways' (Massey, 2005, pp. 164-165). I do not attempt to disrupt the local way of life by bombarding the readers with her/is displaced experiences in relation

to topographical and climatological difference; rather, how s/he lives up to the expectation, which the locals, the society or her/imself may hold, is the focus here.

Coming from one country where there is mostly one season in a year[27] to another where people can experience four seasons in one day[28] is indeed a noticeably embodied experience. Her/is first arrival in the UK in July shocked her/im by the unexpected chilliness when compared with the unbearable heat and high humidity during summer in Taiwan. S/he then started to imagine and to worry about whether s/he could survive the coldness in winter. A few years later, s/he found her/is body had become accustomed to the cold and only summer clothes suited her/im when going back to Taiwan in the winter. The physical adjustment in fact ignited mental and emotional changes concerning the weather. For instance, in her/is writing her/is mood changed according to the weather. In addition to her/is quickly changeable mood, s/he began to cherish sunshine within a country that was mostly filled with miserable and melancholy weather, instead of avoiding it for the sake of staying 'white' as s/he used to do in Taiwan. By enjoying sunshine, s/he started to do certain types of activities that the locals would do; therefore, unconsciously, s/he aligned her/imself with the British culture in regard to basic daily life. This embodied experience not only helped her/im to realise how British culture/life style had been developing into the present form, but also changed her/is view on the physical world of both countries and her values for life.

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[27] Four seasons are all springs. There is an old saying in Taiwan exaggeratedly stating that there is no sharp rise and fall in the temperature.

[28] It is also often stated that the weather in the UK is unpredictable.

Daily life and the so-called culture

Living in two different cultures, her/is own native culture within her/imself and the host culture in her/is surroundings, provokes reflection of her/is spontaneous changes in identity. The act of changing may be foreseen, but the change per se remained ambiguous, even unknown to us. Cultural identity (Gone et al., 1999; Hall, 1990) is not said to be the centre of attention in this chapter; rather, how cultures play a part in our shifting identity is the focus of attention. I cannot ignore the fact that cultural identity is indeed part of the identity I am looking at, because 'cultural identities are the points of identification... which are made within the discourses of history and culture' (Hall, 1990, p. 226). Culture, as Gone et al. (1999, p. 372) argued, is 'understood to be public... and reproduced symbolic practices', which are shared and available for human meaning-making'. There will not be a single mould for every person as a result of which the public, historically and commonly, execute shared practices. There are differences between cultures, not to mention the individual differences within one culture. What happens when (people in) one culture meet (those in) the other? What happens to people when they move from one culture, which is originally and deeply embedded in them, to another? Cultures do not tell people what to follow or when to conform. Taking an anthropological point of view, culture is said to be the 'complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs, and any other capabilities and habits' (Baldwin et al., 2004, p. 6).

'Cultures do not talk to each other; individuals do' (Sealey, 2004, p. 139). In fact, it is not only encounters between individuals with their own meanings and embodied cultural concepts, but also encounters between different cultures within

individuals. There is no doubt at all that people who are experiencing a multi-cultural milieu will have part of their identities changed (un)willingly. To what extent, however, will people be aware of, accept and welcome their changes? To what extent will people like to acculturate, assimilate into and integrate into the different culture? To what extent will people feel like to keeping from losing their original cultural system? Berry (1990, cited in Smith et al., 2004) classified migrants, who form their new identities in a bicultural context, into four patterns according to the level they interact with their native culture and integrate their identities into the host culture. I try to avoid treating people as if they were only numbers to be classified. What fascinates me is the process of assimilation/acculturation and resistance/alienation, which leads to an unavoidable identity shifting. This classification seems a little arbitrary to me. Firstly, identity shifting does not fix at a certain point across the spectrum of the state of being from separation to assimilation. People may change their identity across space (both in political and geographical senses) and over time, in a sense that the longer they live in a culture, the more they learn from it, assimilate to it, and are aware of it. There are, however, always intervals of people retreating from the tough time of assimilation to their native culture and finding that the native culture is no longer what it seemed to them. Their identity sways to and fro between both ends of the spectrum and is always on the move. Secondly, the identity shifting will be a mixture of cultural assimilation and significant events as people shift from one phase of life to another with the passage of time. The notion of what is appropriate and conventional behaviour at a certain age is always shaped by cultural ideas (Baldwin et al., 2004), but it can change. This mixed and complex circumstance makes it even harder for diasporas/immigrants to identify

whether certain types of changes are affected by culture specifically or by aging. It is never necessary to separate each thread in people's lives, and moreover, it is inappropriate to ascribe a change specifically to one type of fact only.

There are no rights and wrongs in assimilation. The only thing that matters in assimilation is people's choices. (We will have to put the political fact aside here that the separation from the host culture may cause difficulties for the government.) Taking Jamaican migrants' changes as an example, what matters to them in social and cultural changes are their beliefs, values, symbols and the pattern of their social relations (Foner, 1977). Once diasporas/immigrants choose (not) to adjust themselves to the new social/cultural milieu, their personal changes, which may be identified as identity shifting later, start to permeate through all aspects of their lives.

Music and connections

因爲生活背景的差異 很多時間很難明白 或是 join in 他們的話題裡 像是聊有關音樂 完全我就無法參與 很多時間會寧願不去參與任何朋友的活動	Because of difference of lived experience, it's hard to understand or join in their topics. For example, the topic in relation to music is the one that I can't join in at all. Most of the time, I would rather not take part in any of their activities.
參加 Pottery class, Spanish class 開始有跟當地人接觸 慢慢有比較開放自己 跟朋友之間也多了一些話題可以聊	I had started making contact with the local, gradually opening myself. Joining in the pottery class and Spanish class got me more topics to chat with friends.

Each one of her/im came to the UK for different reasons, but the common element that s/he had was to assimilate into the 'local'. Under the large umbrella of culture, s/he had acquired the sense of what British culture may signify through the media, her/is surroundings, the encounters with people that s/he met everyday and even stereotype. Making contact with the 'local' was the most direct way in which s/he could learn real conversations and 'culturally appropriate' reaction in real life. The commencement of breaking the ice, however, was almost the heartbreaking moment for her/im in a way that s/he had no connection with British culture except that s/he spoke English. Having no knowledge of collective memory (grand as national events and public incidents, or small as family gatherings, social occasions with friends, and local events) in common with friends and acquaintances in the UK, s/he got fewer opportunities to smooth away the gap between her/im and British people. Apart from the language barrier, one of the cultural topics that s/he was unlikely to engage her/im in conversation was music and related topics.

All sorts of music are in a sense generated and developed culturally, locally, historically, and individually as well as collectively. Music can be said to be one form of narrative, telling people's stories, conveying people's emotions, and somehow representing a listener's lived experience too. When people compose their own music (such as, for a commercial product), the cultural baggage (Bennett, 2000) that they carry along with them is subconsciously embedded in the music. At the same time, music may function as a resonance that conjures up memories, emotions and the feelings of listeners, bringing them back to a certain time or a certain place that the music once linked to their life histories. Music (especially pop music) is also related to

language. Unlike some Taiwanese people who are enchanted by everything from the West, s/he came across the UK by chance, and therefore *English songs*[29] had been slightly out of her context until s/he arrived in the UK. The lack of knowledge of *English songs* deprived her/im of opportunities to make the connection with new friends. Music, to general adults like her/im, may not provide as powerful a resource as it does to the youth. As Bennett argues (Bennett, 2000), in a way young people seek for belonging and the relationship with social environments through music, but, nonetheless, it provides a cultural space in which people choose to dwell.

There seemed to be, apart from culturally-related music, plenty of topics with which s/he could make a connection with new friends. In fact, without a good language proficiency and confidence, s/he felt too shy to draw attention to anything s/he was familiar with. S/he always tried hard to make something of them, but this turned out to be more frustrating. S/he then reached a situation where, as Sarup pointed out, 's/he is physically close while remaining cultural remote' (1996, p. 10). The remoteness not only frustrated her/im, but also physically isolated her/imself from people as a result. Not until s/he started to take Spanish and pottery lessons, did s/he make a start to crack the isolation and to create the link with the local.

These Spanish and pottery lessons, in the local community, were a link between her/im and British people. How were these lessons seen as the connections between her/im from Taiwanese culture and her/is new friends from British culture while none of them sounded culturally-related to English? If these English culturally-unrelated

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[29] By English songs, I mean the songs of the English language. These may include all songs in English, which are internationally distributed, from a variety of countries.

lessons can be the ones that built up the connection/conversation between them, why did s/he not think of making anything that s/he knew from Taiwanese culture a device to trigger off the conversation in social events? Linking two different cultures required bridging the gap in between. Whatever a bridge may be, it must contain a shared element and a mutual interest/respect/understanding. Even though Spanish and pottery making may not be the shared experience among friends, the localisation of those lessons operated as a physical/geographical connection with her/is new friends or other British people. It was not that her/is experience in Taiwan could not arouse English friends' interests, but her/is worries, or rather, speculations over which British people would not be interested in the stories out of their experiences stopped her/imself from trying. The timid and reserved attitude seemed not unusual for Taiwanese people when having encounters with unfamiliar people in an unfamiliar place. S/he was to some extent a stranger (Sarup, 1996) waiting to be invited to be a legitimate insider of the community and of the culture.

Greetings

常讓我手足無措的狀況就是
當陌生人跟我打招呼：
"Hey Love, How are you doing today"
我不會稱陌生人爲"LOVE"
只是擦身而過也敢叫我"love"
厚！醬要我怎麼反應？

A situation that often makes me uneasy is
when a stranger greets me with
'Hey love, how are you doing today?'
I will not call a stranger 'LOVE'
A person who just passed by dared to call me 'love'
Crikey! How shall I react to this?

How are you doing today
我覺得這句話是個問句
有問就要有答才有禮貌
然而，英國人自己不一定這麼認爲

'How are you doing today?'
is a question I think.
We must answer to show courtesy.
However, British people may not think so.

就好像以前台灣人問“假爸味“
另一方並不用把他剛吃飽的那頓有什麼
好料統統向人家報告一下
可是我也沒辦法像大部份英國人
把這句話當耳邊風完全不理會
但是回答“Fine, thank you, How are you doing today"又似乎太囉嗦
人家應該也不期望會得到回應吧？！

It's just like Taiwanese people asking 'Have you eaten yet?'
One will not tell the other whatever they have eaten.
I can't be like most of the British people
taking this question as an invisible one,
but giving an answer like 'Fine, thank you, how are you doing today' seems too much.
People may not expect to hear any response?

英國人很愛問 Are you alright?
我很難理解
他們並不是要真正要知道你好不好
只是禮貌性問一下
如果真的回“不好”
他們也不見得有耐心聽你說
好像要的只是表面上的禮貌對話
我還曾經看過有人都已經錯身而過了
但這種對話還在繼續
”Are you alright?
Yeah, I'm good. Thanks. Are you alright?
Good good good, catch you later”
連腳步都沒有停一下

British people really like to ask 'are you alright?'
I can't understand
They do not want to know 'are you really alright'
It's just a sentence - a greeting.
If you answered 'no, I'm not well'
They may not be patient with listening to you
It seems that what they want is just superficial chatter.
I have seen people having this kind of conversation when passing by
'Are you alright?
Yeah, I'm good. Thanks. Are you alright?
Good good good, catch you later',
without even stopping for a second.

This section of writing looks, at first glance, as if it was a clash of languages. In fact, the way of greeting people can be international as well as specifically cultural. I assume that people all know what 'love' means, literally rather than practically, but the way British people use the word 'love' seems rather casual for her/im. Some people may use 'love' as a hospitable manner and never seem to realise how others may feel

about it or react to it. S/he could not easily express 'love' because of the way s/he had been brought up. In Taiwan, s/he was hardly encouraged to show love openly, not even to beloved family. It was difficult for her/im even just saying 'thank you' to family members, not to mention hugs, kisses and saying love, all of which are the most common way to show love. In her/is generation, with the legacy of colonisation of Japan, s/he treated things seriously, especially with serious issues. Love is one of those. Since love is such a big word for her/im, s/he could not easily say it with a casual attitude until s/he really felt it. Therefore, love, a word slipped out of a stranger's mouth, was apparently too awkward for her/im to respond to in a culturally appropriate way. Instead of yelling at a stranger that *you are not supposed to call me love*, s/he kept quiet. This may be one way to show her/is respect of cultural difference, but I wonder why s/he did not express her/is discomfort. Was it a fear of either expressing her/imself or confronting another culture?

'How are you doing? Are you alright? Alright?' These words are the most heard greeting words in our daily lives. They sometimes signify the beginning of a conversation/activity, but sometimes mean little on some occasions. S/he, as a newcomer in Britain, was again confused about seeing the hesitation in British people's eyes when s/he sincerely/seriously replied to the 'daily greeting'. S/he then realised that they did not mean to worry about you, rather, 'are you alright', to her/is surprise, only means 'hello' in some context. This is one of the 'eyebrow raising' moments, when s/he came to grasp the sense of this kind of question. The process of learning the implication of different circumstances was to some extent fun and embarrassing, because s/he could sense the other's reaction to her reply, which was contextually wrong or out of their

expectation. It is not necessary to feel embarrassed while s/he is acquiring the knowledge of British culture, people and language. S/he could not help but put the blame on her/imself even if it was just a misinterpretation between two cultures.

In fact, this type of casual greeting is not unusual in many countries. Similarly, 'Have you eaten yet?' is such a common Taiwanese greeting throughout the countryside. The historical evolution behind this question attaches to farming lives in the countryside. In the olden days, farming provided the majority of jobs all over Taiwan, and people lived in houses rather than apartments. People usually began work before dawn and finished by noon. After lunch, they all sat outside their own houses having a rest and enjoyed the rest of the day. They were all in each other's sight, and no one bothered to move to talk. Whenever people saw neighbours coming out, they just spoke out loud for the first greeting of the day, which was reasonably 'Have you eaten yet?'. Farming life has mostly disappeared nowadays, but the tradition of greeting is firmly established. In the city, however, due to the extinction of the farming routine, people use the greeting much less. Taiwanese people certainly will not take its literal meaning as an invitation from the one who says it. If it is an invitation, the question will be followed by 'Would you like to come along to eat?'. In addition to this reason, food is an essential part of our basic lives as well as the social element for people to make connections.

The historical context clearly explains the particular Taiwanese greeting 'Have you eaten yet?'. In contrast, there is no clear path for her/im to trace the origin of English greetings. S/he has to be placed in the context of present English living in order to make sense of the different implications of both serious and casual greetings. Even

though s/he can now distinguish these two situations, she still does not know how to react to the casual greetings. Indeed, s/he has a fear of replying 'inappropriately and incorrectly'. The fear comes from being different from others. Culture is not only about having something in common or belonging to a certain group, but also about being different as individuals (Baldwin et al., 2004; Currie, 2004). When s/he overemphasizes cultural compatibility or incompatibility in her/is life, s/he, then, loses her/is own sense of her/is culture and her/is identity. S/he will not be able to integrate the fragmented self until s/he considers cultures as air, which is invisible but everywhere, dense but weightless, easy to be ignored but essential.

Attitude and values at work

以前在台灣	When I was in Taiwan,
工作一星期七天	I worked seven days a week.
一年沒有幾天的休假	There were not many days off.
但在英國	But in the UK,
發現多忙的人	no matter how busy one is,
也會安排出去旅遊計劃	he/she will make a plan for going out
放鬆心情	or travelling to relax.
我在台灣的價值觀是	In Taiwan, my belief was
工作第一	work first
能實現自我價值爲先	self-fulfilment is the priority.
到了英國之後	After arriving in the UK
因爲家庭爲先	I had family
開始慢慢接受工作只是賺錢的方式	I had started to accept that a job is
家庭生活與家人的相處爲先	just a means to earn money.
剛來這上班最不習慣的是	Family first!
可以準時下班	The most unfamiliar thing at work
僅管身爲主管	here was
大主管也希望我們準時下班	I could get off work promptly.
老闆會說 time to go back the family	Even though I was a manager,
還真要下班時間沒回家	the boss also wanted us to get off
真會被老闆誤會上班剛做的事還沒做完	promptly
	The boss would say 'time to go back
	to the family'

在台灣上班加班到七點下班
還會被唸耍白眼
想回家跟朋友聚聚
會被認爲不把工作當回事就想回家

If my home time was delayed,
the boss would think I had not
finished the work.
In Taiwan, leaving for home at seven
could get a scolding.
Wanting to go home to relax
could be deemed that I saw work as
nothing.

Culture is, as Baldwin et al. (2004) suggested, the way in which s/he lived a life, the words which s/he chose to talk to each other, and even the body s/he acted out, that is to say, it is everywhere. Her/is lived experience in two countries revealed the cultural difference in many aspects of her/is life. The most significant difference happens at the work place. In Taiwan, s/he worked seven days a week, more than eight hours a day. She worked so hard that even her/imself almost believed that working long hours everyday was a normal thing. A boss may demand hard work from an employee, but, nonetheless people deserved a quality life. The atmosphere was so distorted in a way that the longer a person stayed in the office, the more he or she was thought to be hard working. The whole working environment in Taiwan was, however, so consistent throughout that nobody could defy the atmosphere. Neither did s/he. It is, perhaps, because Taiwanese education emphasises the obedience to authority, to the majority and to social expectation. This may be my own bias against the Taiwanese education system and general Taiwanese characteristics. S/he would feel wrong about leaving work promptly, as if it was her/is obligation to work overtime. Both employers and employees were not aware of the importance of 'efficiency' at work. It could be that employees wasted too much time during normal hours so that they had to work overtime, or rather, employees were expecting to work overtime so that they fooled

around. Either of these scenarios made the situation worse. It was not only the supposition that employers expect employees to spend the best part of their lives in offices, but also peer pressure preventing people from leaving work promptly. S/he had been too within the vicious circle that there seemed no way out, until s/he came to the UK soaking up everything new to her/im.

S/he found that however busy they are, British people spend time with their family and also try to squeeze some time to enjoy a holiday. S/he then realised that putting family and quality life second to work was not always the best thing, and the attitude and values towards work burnt her/im out as a result. This may start to sound like a cliché in which 's/he adored everything English so much that s/he had forgotten her/is own pride'. In fact, in some situations, s/he suffered from inefficient customer services and slow administration in the UK. The thing that changed her/is values was British people's attitude towards work, education and, overall, life. S/he was always rushing to get everything done while in Taiwan as if everything was yelling for its priority and legitimacy. To some extent, the immediacy of response (and services) was fed into the rise of her/is needs and increasing impatience. Being thrown into an environment of which the values were substantially at the opposite of her/is original belief, s/he found it is not only a serious disruption to her/is original world, but also an expansion of her/is original fixed vision. Rather than being against the unfamiliar values, s/he chose to swallow them at first and followed the hidden rules in this new culture. S/he did not lose her/is own values, which was always in her/is blood, but, nonetheless, s/he would not like to judge a new world without witnessing it, understanding it, and experiencing it. The new view of life had started to be embodied

in her/im and had generated new perspectives on many aspects. 'Indeed, the body has come to be seen as a site for the inscription of sociocultural meanings and social relations of power,... our bodies are also conduits of cultural meaning and values' (Furman et al., 2005, p. 129). S/he had intermingled the cultural meaning and values that s/he had learnt from British culture with her/is intrinsic beliefs. The new values may not entirely destroy her/is deep-rooted beliefs, yet they had subverted the way in which s/he now viewed the working culture, from different angles, in the UK with a more open eye. 'By travelling to their 'world' we can understand what it is to be them and what it is to be ourselves in their eyes' (Lugones, 1990, cited in Furman et al., 2005, p. 132), and most importantly, in our renewed eyes.

Attitude and values in education

家庭教育上	In terms of family education,
比較重視小孩的個人想法	children's opinions are always heard.
以鼓勵去教育小孩	Adults encourage children
讓他們更有自信心	and reinforce their confidence.
在我身邊的朋友（英國）	Those (English) friends around me
都很會表達自己的想法意見	are really good at conveying their opinions.
很喜歡討論	They like to discuss a lot.
相對中國小孩較保守	By comparison, Chinese children are more reserved.
偏於只是接受或聆聽的一面	They tend to accept or to listen.
我自己是比較不愛發表意見	I myself am not an expressive person,
但現在慢慢也會主動表達自己的想法	but now I express my opinions more actively.
談到英國人很會給人讚美	British people are really good at compliments
而且都不吝於給人讚美	and are very generous with giving them.
就算要批評前也會先稱讚一下別人	They will praise people before criticising them.
這會讓人有自信	
難怪英國人都不怕把自己的意見表達出來	

也不怕意見不同或
太天真而被笑
他們重視的是你的聲音有沒有被聽到
我覺得這是很值得被鼓勵的態度

It gives people confidence.
No wonder British people are not
afraid of expressing their opinions.
They are not afraid of having different
opinions or being too naïve.
What they care about is whether your
voice is heard.
I think this is an attitude that is worth
encouraging.

相較於接收西式教育的人
（在此以英國人爲主）
也許因中(台)式教育比較要求反求諸己
所以我們的自我要求較高
且因民族性較內向
亦讓我們對於"發問"感到難堪
尤其在眾人面前
一對一時較爲容易

Perhaps because Chinese (Taiwanese)
education lays great stress on self-
discipline,
we have higher expectations on
ourselves by comparison with those
who had a Western education
(mainly British people here).
And the characteristics of our
nationality are to be shy and introvert.
This may make us feel embarrassed at
'questioning',
especially in front of a crowd.
It's easier when talking one to one.

There seems to be a stereotypical image of 'individualism' in the Western world and 'collectivism' in the Eastern World. The generalisation was the most illegitimate thing to say in this context, but, unfortunately the impression emerged automatically when s/he had encounters with people from different cultures. In reality, such images did not appear to be the best start to a cross-cultural encounter. N onetheless, this provided an opportunity to get to know the other party. Her/is observations of English individuals and education not only made her/im aware of a different way of expressing themselves, but also got her/im to reflect on her/is taken-for-granted knowledge about her/im own culture. From her/is observation, s/he found that English parents (even adults) did not always use a high-handed manner to discipline children, rather, they

took children's opinions into consideration. They did not make a future plan of the whole life for children. Instead, they allowed children to develop what they were fond of, along with children's own wills. Apart from their compulsory education, children were also encouraged to express their feelings, emotions and opinions at the proper time and places as individuals. All of these behaviours were relatively unusual things that s/he had rarely seen in her/is generation. Since s/he had not yet had any children, her/is knowledge of education of children were the experiences s/he had had while little. It was seemingly unfair to compare British people's attitude towards education now to the Taiwanese way of educating children then. Nevertheless, the attitude of Taiwanese parents toward education for children has not changed profoundly since then.

It inevitably looked like a questionable assertion, which will never be proven by numeric statistics, but nonetheless, heartily felt and believed. There were too many small examples of finding different attitudes towards children to tell. Therefore, you may not find a particular story in her/is writing. When all of her/im had been through the same situation and had had similar notions about it, this phenomenon was definitely worth probing further. The salient features that s/he was alerted to were those which are significantly different from what s/he learnt in Taiwan. Taiwanese children are not encouraged to show their opinions and disagreement, because discrepancy and divergence always caused social discord within the community. Although s/he had been taught 'complying with the majority, yet showing respect to the minority', the emphasis was the former rather than the latter. In school, s/he was always a receiver to teachers. There were a lot of 's/hes' out there being taught the same thing in Taiwan. Years back, at home, s/he was commonly told that 'children use no mouths but ears'. Children were

not allowed to interrupt a social conversation amongst adults, nor were they allowed to ask questions about what adults found difficult to explain. S/he had learned plenty of idioms, sayings, and expressions about 'silence is golden'. Those phrases were not just abstract sayings. Instead, they were practised, performed and embodied in her/is daily life. Obviously, 'the body is constructed by, shaped and reshaped by, the intersection of a series of disciplinary discursive practices' (Hall, 2000, p. 24). Silence had become one of the Taiwanese people's typical characteristics as a consequence. Silence had embedded in her/is community, society, and blood. The embodiment of silence had settled on her/im for years until s/he saw the different phenomenon in the UK. The tide, then, turned.

Under the pressure of conforming to the public morality in Taiwan, s/he felt constrained from expressing a different opinion by a fear of being the black sheep in a group. Being a black sheep may have been a pressure in the UK, but s/he admired the way in which British individuals encouraged others to express their opinions without making a judgement. Of course it was not always perfect in all aspects. Treating children with respect is certainly laudable, but to what extent should an adult take children's voice into account and to what extent ought children to expect to be independent individuals was one of those issues always sparking off inconclusive debate. The possible dark side of this attitude was disregarded here because what s/he had seen and learnt from the British attitude towards acceptance of multiplicity of different voices was good enough to urge her to reflect on her/is conventional Taiwanese attitude. In addition to conformity with the majority, s/he also had been taught about strict self-discipline. Parents and teachers usually scolded

children/students for not performing well in their studies and accused them of not making efforts with it. S/he may not earn a compliment by having good grades, but s/he definitely received a scolding for getting bad grades. In contrast to the Taiwanese way of educating children with a negative perspective, British people tended to give positive feedback. For instance, if a child gets a score of seventy out of one hundred in an exam, English adults, as far as I have observed, tend to applaud them for the effort they have made, whether they wanted children to improve or not. Taiwanese parents/teachers, however, will say 'you could have got a higher score if you read more carefully (studied harder/played less and so on, from an endless list)'. The part that a child had not done well was overstated, and the part that s/he had made efforts to achieve seemed to be diminished. Parents/teachers wanted their children/students to be good, even outstanding, especially at studies, but unfortunately their strong desire for exceptional children/students blinded them to the fact that individuals have different talents for different things. Having inherited these negative thoughts from parents/teachers, s/he had learned to set her/imself a difficult goal and lay the blame for not achieving it on her/imself. Asking questions could mean, firstly, 'I am in doubt about it' and secondly, 'I do not understand it'. For her/im, the former may connote that the questioner had different opinions on it, and the latter denoted that the questioner was showing her/is ignorance about it. B oth connotation and denotation spoke of her/is fear of being different/inferior so that questioning had become an embarrassing action, especially in public. The open attitude of British people towards different voices had led to an appreciable effect on her/im throughout these years. Her/is thoughts about attitude and

values were tuned to a mixed ideology of the Western and the Eastern, and yet the process of mediation never comes to an end.

Attitude and values in general

在台灣，人們是比較懦弱的
我們不被鼓勵有自己的意見
對一件事很喜歡我們會說：
我蠻喜歡這個的
但英國人會直接說：I love it!
對於不喜歡也一樣
我們會說：還好...
因爲我們不被鼓勵太偏激

In Taiwan, people are more cowardly.
We are not encouraged to have our own opinions.
If we like one thing very much, we will say:
I fairly like it.
But British people will just say: I love it!
As for something we don't like
We will say: It's ok.
Because we are not encouraged to behave at the extremes.

英國人喜歡與不喜歡分的很清楚
也不覺得說不喜歡是一種冒犯
所以她們對彼此的喜好是比較尊重的
一點都不會勉強對方
這是我在台灣比較少見
也是我慢慢的被影響的地方
比較會表達自己的想法了
也慢慢的比較會想到自己
不再以別人的方便爲主
先想到自己是否能配合了
對別人的包容性也相對提高了

British people always clearly separate likes and dislikes.
The dislikes mean no offense to them.
So they respect each other's likes
They never force each other.
I have hardly seen this in Taiwan.
This is also what I have been affected by.
I can express more of my opinions and gradually think of myself more.
I don't always accord everything to others now.
And also I have greater tolerance to others than before.

不同的文化背景也會
直接影響溝通的內容及方式
比如說
爲了避免不愉快
我們常常嘴巴上說好、是
但心裡卻不認同別人的想法

A different culture will directly affect the means and the content of communication.
For example,
in order to avoid conflict,
we often say 'yes' and 'ok'
but actually do not agree with their opinions.

在這個不發聲就不會有得到的社會文化下
自己也變得不是那麼息事寧人的人
但也不是找架吵
就只是不滿會說
而不是暗自忍淚吞聲
會爲自己爭取
但多少還是會覺得這樣好嗎
會不會太得理不饒人了
但是我知道自己是比以前會發聲了

Under the social culture of 'no voice, no gain'
I had become a person who does not keep quiet all the time.
I was not to argue or fight with people.
I would express dissatisfaction rather than blink the tears back.
I would fight for the right,
but I still felt uncertain about this at times.
Would I be too hard on people?
At least I know I am not that quiet now.

Following the previous section, this part of her/is writings is akin to what has been under exploration in this chapter. The difference of attitude and values between both cultures stirs up the conflict between her/im and British others as well as within her/imself, and, furthermore, results in struggles as well as reflection on her/imself in terms of not only work and education, but all aspects. I do not advocate for cultural stereotypes or generalisations, but rather, for her/is empirical knowledge about English behaviour of both the public and people surrounding her/im. Without the numerical data, some of her/is thoughts about English attitude and values could have seemingly appeared to be broad generalisations about how British people behave/react. The individual who s/he had observed may be one type of example in the UK, and yet I have no intention of extrapolating British cultural behaviour from just one type of examples. On the one hand, the common element of their behaviour/reactions is derived from the cultural impact, but on the other, the similarity of their behaviours/reactions also evolves into one of the British cultural characteristics. Collective identification, as Jenkins (1996, p. 81) suggests, 'derives from similar behaviour and circumstances'. The

common element of British behaviour that s/he discerned in her/is daily life may seem normal to British people, but remarkable to her/im. Somehow or other, all of her/im have no identical but similar experiences of what is considered to be the common element in which the trifles in social events and in human encounter seem rather invisible to British people. Although s/he discovered some common elements of British people's behaviour from her/is observations and experiences, I do not rule out other possibilities that other British people may render a different (even opposite) form of behaviour. Collectivity is going to be as multiple as individuality can be after all. No matter what s/he makes of the common element, what really matters to me is how her/is real experiences, feelings and thoughts about British culture and British people's behaviours is transforming her/im.

Expressing the likes and dislikes was surprisingly not easy for her/im. This could be understood in two different ways. One was that s/he did not really know what s/he liked or disliked, the other was that s/he felt hesitant to say it – in other words, s/he had been trained not to express her/is likes and dislikes. How so? As I mentioned earlier, parents and teachers in Taiwan overemphasised the superficial meaning (learning performance) of education. This could have developed from the heritage of Confucianism. A common phrase of describing four divisions of society in ancient China, in descending order, the scholars, the farmers, the artisans and the merchants, that had been passed down without much alteration, was still prevalent in Taiwanese society. The sequence may have, nowadays, changed into the scholars, the merchants, the artisans and the farmers, but the scholars have always been considered to be the most respectable division. Moreover, Taiwanese parents consciously dominated

children's lives in such a way that parents often made a decision in the best interest of children. Children were told to obey, respect and listen to their parents and unfortunately lost their free-will as a result. S/he was one of them. One of the two possibilities that I could make of being less able to express her/is likes and dislikes may be attributed to her/is loss of free-will. The other could be that the connotation of 'likes' and 'dislikes' possessed her/im. Being brought up in a post-colonial country, which had been colonised by Japan, s/he treated things seriously, even her likes and dislikes. Therefore, it felt to her/im that her dislikes are offences to people while s/he absolutely knew it did not have to be an offence at all. Equally, her/is likes were, by her/imself, deemed the bold request of what s/he desired. British people's easy and relaxing attitude toward their likes and dislikes gave her/im a new perspective on this trivial matter. They did not ignore other people's likes and dislikes just because they took it easy, but rather, they took it into consideration in an easy manner of dealing with it. S/he started to consider her/is own will first rather than other people's preference first, and resulting from that, s/he surprisingly found that the attitude helped her/im to cheerfully accept other people's likes and dislikes with no problems. Not only did the easy attitude make the situation that s/he used to feel tense about lighter, but it also freed her/im from the conventional Confucian precepts to express her/imself more comfortably.

One strand of Confucian thoughts that had previously become embedded in her/im was social harmony. The avoidance of confrontation, argument, and even just disagreement was quite obviously found in her/is writing. Unlike British people, instead of talking the disagreement over with others, s/he spontaneously evaded the direct

conflict by insincerely agreeing with others, or keeping silence. It was thought to be one of the ways in which mental endurance could keep people in a community/society in harmony. S/he could not help but act in obedience, rather than think in obedience, to the widely acknowledged rules, despite the fact that it did not result in perfect harmony in all respects. Her/is mind was the only way in which s/he could discreetly rebel against the superficial principle of social harmony that had long since been established. The suppressed thought that s/he had was the trigger for the acceptance of the British way of communication. S/he had now developed more explicit ability to communicate with people from different cultures and had become more able to negotiate because of the experiences of unpleasant occurrences and the emancipation of the social fetters. Even so, s/he could not stop being worried about the correctness of her/is modified behaviour.

Whether or not s/he was consciously aware of the cultural context which exerts considerable impact on her/im, s/he, indeed, was/is/will be in a process of continuously changing her/is identity. Sarup's words validate my approach to the identity transformation in which 'identity in postmodern thought is not a thing; the self is necessarily incomplete, unfinished – it is 'the subject in process' (Sarup, 1996, p. 47). Despite the fact that 'identity is only conceivable in and through difference' (ibid), suggests Sarup, 'similarity as fact or tendency is no less important than difference' (Simmel, 1950:30 cited in Jenkins, 1996, p. 5). Scholars may lay different emphasis on different tendencies while looking at different types of identities, perhaps, similarity in social identities and difference in individual identities. None of which, however, can be pondered solely, as 'individual identities, emphasising the differentiation of embodied

uniqueness, are social products' (Jenkins, 1996, p. 81). S/he, in her/is writing, explored the differentiation of embodied uniqueness between two cultures and between her/is old self and new self, and at the same time, during these four workshops, s/he scrutinised the similarity between all of her/im in discovering *the* difference which acted as a catalyst for identity transformation. Now I can firmly assert that our identities, after our exploration of her/is and our personal changes in all aspects, are not transforming from A to B, but are shifting along our main journey in the UK, interspersed with side journeys elsewhere, where we cannot define the start and the end. Our personal changes will be re-termed 'identity shifting'.

27th July 2008, in the aircraft, Taiwan

'Ladies and gentlemen, we are about to land at the airport. Please.....' the flight attendant was announcing through the loudspeaker.

I was very excited about coming back to Taiwan after another gap of two years, even though there would be no one coming to pick me up from the airport. I also had to travel for another four hours to where my family lived now, all by myself in the middle of the night. It did not put me off feeling happy. I had dreamed of all the Taiwanese snacks that I yearned for so long. I had a long 'food-to-eat' list, not just in mind, but on paper, for real. There was a big smile on my face! I remained in the seat and patiently waited for the cabin crew to usher out all the passengers from the aircraft.

The queue was moving out, and I followed. A strange thing happened as soon as I stepped out of the cabin. All of a sudden, I couldn't breathe. The air was too thin, oh, no, it was too thick to breathe properly. It felt like my skin was covered with a thick layer of petrol. I then realised that it was the high humidity causing the problem. I was shocked with my bodily reaction to the weather. Breathless heat was everywhere, even in the air-conditioned grand hall. I had no where to hide. I kept rubbing my arms as if the sticky layer of something could be wiped off. It was a most unbearable hour until I got on to the air-conditioned coach. Phew! I could finally breathe a little better.

2nd September 2008, Taiwan

I was going to fly back to the UK tomorrow. It had been a wonderful holiday and I didn't want to go. Sigh. I opened the small pocket in the front of the suitcase and fished around for the key and lock. My fingers felt a piece of crumpled paper. I took it out. It was my food-to-eat list. Reading the list, I realised that I had just eaten a couple of them. Over the last six weeks in Taiwan, I had forgotten this list. And now I was going to leave. Did I regret missing all the yummy snacks? Strangely enough, I did not care. But I knew I will miss them once I had arrived in the UK.

CHAPTER BLACK AND WHITE – MY FINDINGS, REFLEXIVE MUSING AND THOUGHTS ABOUT THE FUTURE

Tentative but particular findings

Identity can be understood as a process, as 'being' or 'becoming', and that is why it is difficult to identify oneself (Jenkins, 1996; Sarup, 1996). The process of 'becoming' or 'being' without an end can be described as 'identity shifting'. By doing collective biography, I have placed the emphasis on the collective symbol of her/im which represents the collectivity of our encounters with language and culture. The process was constructed to draw our experiences together and to work out the collective change that we have gone/are going through. Whoever we were respectively, the similar experiences we had had in the UK had diverted our individual changes towards the same direction. We would not have gone through identity shifting, foregrounding the impact of language and culture (rather than influences of aging and life stages from the normal daily lives in Taiwan only) had we not come to the UK. We, perhaps, surprisingly find that, in the difference between her/is first short stay as a tourist and her/is second stay as a resident, it is not the length of time we stay in the UK, but how we position ourselves and are positioned in this diasporic situation that matters. The conceptual leap from guesting to diasporing ignites our diasporic state of mind. This increasing awareness of the diasporic shifting identity has created a bond amongst us, and collective biography provides an opportunity to embody that bond. In their collective biography, Davies and Gannon (2006) mentioned little of the landscape and the environment of their setting and did not bring it into play. Due to the geographical and emotional displacement of our diasporic state, however, I take account of space and

fracture. The geographical sense of space generates contradiction as well as connection between diaspora and the predicament. Even though space is not one of the direct causes for shifting identities, it gives rise to the embodied writing in relation to language and culture.

The syntax and ideology of the first language constructs people's logic and one's lexicon denotes and connotes personality. In this sense, linguistics has a point that language surely has an impact on identity. Learning a second language, however, is unlikely in a short time to subvert the logic and ideology that has become implanted in the mind. Feeling constrained while expressing ourselves in the second language, not only do we lose our self confidence, but also we start to sense the split selves within. Insufficient language proficiency shakes our self confidence but has not really deconstructed our identities. It is easy to confuse shattering of confidence with identity deconstruction, because we lose the sense of ourselves while losing the confidence. Being used as a vehicle for our daily life, undoubtedly, the limitation of domination by linguistics indeed possesses the power to shape our identity shifting, and yet it was not as much as other factors did to us in the long-term effect. However, the sense of shifting seems to be magnified when switching back to our first language. Living in a second language culture allows a veil between me and the intimate powerful stories. When the veil is lifted, it surprisingly leaves me raw and vulnerable. Language is never simply the language itself, but a powerful culturally embedded device. It is the cultural meanings/explication/implication that language (Stuart, 1998) carries affecting our attitudes, values, social interaction and therefore changing our identities. Culture, in this sense, is credited as a far more influential factor than language to the diasporic identity

shifting. So, if identity is a process of becoming or being, what then are we becoming or being under the influence of culture, in a major sense, and language, in a minor sense?

First of all, the process of diasporic identity shifting has opened wide our minds in ways that those different attitudes and values strike a blow against our original beliefs but at the end create the new scope for us. The downside of these different attitudes and values, which were not mentioned at all throughout the writing, also discreetly make us aware of the advantages and disadvantages of previous beliefs and assumptions. For instance, working overtime in Taiwan, one of the dominant discourses has been eroded by the different perspectives on life in the UK. At the same time s/he is aware that the efficiency of general service in Taiwan proves better in comparison with the UK in working hard for long hours. This is followed by a new perspective on an irrational thought of white superiority, which comes out of ignorance of the lived experience of different cultures. For instance, s/he never seemed to doubt the legitimacy of silence and an obedient attitude, largely suppressing her/is will, until s/he met western values. On the one hand, difference brings out possibilities, but on the other, s/he started losing her/is self-respect. The process s/he has been through has helped her/im to stand on her/is dignity wherein s/he mentally and unconsciously stripped out everything s/he owned to make her/im feel inferior. Not until s/he got the picture of the beliefs and values in British culture, did s/he start appreciating her/is own beliefs and values, and stopped permeating a sense of inferiority. S/he lost self-worth in the beginning of her/is stay, and the process of diasporic identity shifting has helped her/im to win self-respect back.

All the above are our particular findings, but they are slippery concepts. S/he knew what s/he would not have otherwise known had s/he not moved to the UK. Coming to know what s/he could not possibly know provokes identity shifts. If readers of this text have not encountered similar experiences in their lives, I would hope this study would give you a fair sense of what sort of mental struggles any diaspora will go through. For those who are about to go through this process, I hope my study gives some indication of what is to come. I am not suggesting you can avoid the pain of such a process, but it is certainly an advantage to have some idea of what you might expect. Get ready for it!

Whose voice? Am I distinct myself from others? Shall I?

My initial dream was collectively to create a group identity. This did not happen in the end, because I deliberately singled out individuals from time to time, within this representation of collectiveness. By producing a collective voice of 'her/im', I put their voices together but failed to identify who 's/he' really is. When s/he presents, individuals become anonymous. The anonymity is not 'the destruction of every voice but a proliferation of the possibilities of hearing' (Hunt & Sampson, 2006, p. 48). Being heard is the very essential core of this research. Whose voice is being heard very much depended on my final edited account, as her/is voice is 'almost always filtered through the author's account' (Hertz, 1997, p. xii). I, as the final writer of this thesis, try to involve as much of group member's voice as I can to create a comprehensive 'her/im'. Unfortunately, even though I had my participants and implicit readers (Hunt, 2004) very closely in mind while writing, it was not possible to create a comprehensive

her/im. From a Foucauldian perspective this may not matter as 'what matters is not who is speaking but the effect a particular discourse has on people in a society' (Hunt & Sampson, 2006, p. 41).

In doing collective biography, the researcher is for some time placed as one of the participants, but at all other times remains as a researcher. My multiple roles as a researcher, a participant, and a friend complicated this research. My ambivalence towards whether individuality or collectivity with harmony should get priority did not last long, as in collective biography, discord and variability was the important feature that enriched our writing and outcomes through talking and discussion. Contribution, however, signifies responsibility at the same time. It is understood that participants may feel panic if all of a sudden I share the responsibility with them. Therefore, as having been asked, I always demonstrated what kind of memory/story we could share in the first place. I could feel my resistance to always being the first one to share, because of the fear of being a leading example, which may interrupt their original ideas or lead them to where they did not mean to go. This decision disturbed me at all times. I did precede everybody else when sharing memory/story as demanded. What worried me was that Taiwanese people tend to be obedient and lose their individuality in a group. Surprisingly, it turned out to be not so bad as I had worried. Firstly, they may not put forward suggestions (or bring about confrontation) about any themes we discussed, but they were not blindly led by my demonstration. For instance, they came up with some thoughts other than those I mentioned in my demonstration. Secondly, the rapport that has been long established between me and some participants worked to my advantage

in that they were able to gently confront me. Lastly, my memory telling broke the ice in the group, and our listening to and questioning everyone were energised after all.

I consulted group members about confidentiality and anonymity. To my surprise, they all did not mind their 'real' names being presented and even encouraged me to use their real names. The reasons that they gave me were 'nobody knows me'. It is interesting that they all used their 'English names' living in the UK (apart from Nafisa who I never met in person and uses a screen name). Their names have been to some extent inscribed in their own flesh and bone, and further their daily lives. So why do they not mind me using their 'real' names? I think I understand them in a similar way that not only do they all call me 'Martha', but also I choose to tell them 'I am Martha'. They do not have any intention of doing academic work in my field so that they assume that they can stay unrecognised by name. Besides, their official names are still stamped in Chinese (English translation) throughout any documents (except that one person has been using her English name as the official name). English names to them are a sort of social name, which disguises and is anonymous. What matters is not the language the host country is using, but the language people feel intimate connection with.

Have I illegitimately strayed away from collective biography?

I am always worried about whether I have correctly abided by principles of collective biography, but what are those principles? Are there any? Collective biography is a developing alternative approach to social science. There may be strategies and methods for people to enter this practice, but there are not tied to strictly

following the rules. It has not yet been proved universally applicable (whether subjectively or objectively, whether academically or therapeutically) and I was interested to see whether it suited Taiwanese society/people/culture or not. One of my roles in the group was as a communal friend of everyone. It was truly a coincidence that each of them was my friend or acquaintance, although they did not know each other at all. As a friend, I could never conduct neutral research. I could not help but form preconceptions because of my prior knowledge about people I knew in my life. This preconception affected my attitudes towards each of them. Also, I brought some of our off-the-record conversations into my writing, because they were those who I knew personally through daily encounter. It was hard to avoid an overlap between daily conversations and the discussion in our workshops. Bringing personal knowledge about participants into research may seem a flaw, but this personal knowledge compensates to some extent for my being unable to spend more time on building up the relationships between participants and writing together due to the financial and temporal constraints of this study.

這次機會
讓我能有系統的去思考及離（釐）清
英國的生活
大家都有很多類似的經驗
和相同的相法
知道他人也有
同樣的經驗及困擾
是一種抒發
覺得自己不孤單
很多時候都是自己態度的問題
自己心態的問題
語言文化的不同

This opportunity
allows me systematically to ponder
over my life in the UK
We all have similar experiences
and the same thoughts.
Knowing that people have
the same experiences and difficulties
is a relief
I'm not alone
Sometimes it's our attitude
towards these issues
The difference of language and culture
affects us

是有影響
造成一些壓力
語言溝通熟練後
不會是個問題
只要能 open your mind

causing the pressure
For more language practice
it will not be a problem
if you can open your mind

At the end of our last workshops I asked people about how they felt and thought about the workshops. Surprisin gly, everyone came out with similar thoughts about language, culture and self-awareness and at the same time felt relieved to hear people having similar experiences and difficulties. I wove together the writings of three of us (above) in order to show the similarity. A sense of relief drew us into some kind of therapeutic engagement in the collective work. This 'incidental' therapeutic element has been noted by other scholars in collective biography/collective memory-work (Davies & Gannon, 2006; Linnell et al., 2008; Speedy, 2008).

As I mentioned earlier in 'chapter blue', this is a double cross-cultural project. I am using a Western-based methodology to run these workshops in Chinese with people who natively speak Chinese, and took the results for consultations with my English supervisor in English. This double-translation process, translating the language and the process back and forth across languages and cultures, is somewhat a 'hidden' aspect of this study. My questions about the value of the workshops were answered in ways I hoped for, but I am still not at all sure whether appropriating collective biography for Taiwanese people who are not academics is appropriate. I will return to this question later.

Despite the fact that collective biography is heavily influenced by feminist practice, I did not particularly engage with gender issues in this research. I am aware of

some of the gender-related issues in the field, but we did not touch on any gender-related issues during our workshops. We ended up having five females and one male in my group. The imbalance of the sexes held me back from exploring the relationship between gender and diasporic identity, which would be an interesting study.

Writing and reflexivity

One of the particularities of collective biography is the interim products in which individual writings are woven together by the researcher into the collective text. As a group, we collectively worked on each individual's memory and delved into the said and the unsaid. We do not produce 'collective writing' but collectively wrote individual memory into themes during the workshops. The contradictions, similarity and the multiplicity that group members convey enable the final author to produce a reflexive final text. It is clear that if they were to do the final individual writing, each of the members would produce a different text, even based on the same resources. In this case, the final text of our collective biography stayed unknown to me until I put my thoughts on paper bit by bit. In other words, collective biography involves two processes of writing as inquiry, one by the group and another by the collector/researcher. This final text involves not only tracking our group writings and discussions, but also my individual thoughts as I was affected by the language I heard, the books I read, the people I talked to, the things I saw, the food I tasted and smelt, and the life I lived. 'What I write today on these matters may be different from what I might have written yesterday or will write tomorrow' (Etherington, 2004, p. 27). Borrowing from Etherington, this is writing of its time. I have no idea what will occur when I

write. Sometimes a little turning in my mind will take the writing into a different focus at the end of each chapter. In this final text, I am reflexively exploring the process I have undergone, which is definitely a practice of writing as inquiry.

Many ethnographic researchers are concerned about the extent to which a researcher's voice should be involved in their field work and writing. I took myself straight into the field and used my own voice to work on the data. Reflexive awareness becomes 'the primary methodological vehicle' for this research (Etherington, 2004, p. 31). This methodology (practice) of collective biography requires reflexive thinking at all stages of research. I am (and have been) probing cracks, fractures, and the conflict between my values and beliefs, that of participants and that of the present society/culture/country where we live. 'Living every moment reflectively is a matter of heightened awareness of thoughts, feelings and bodily sensations. Awareness creates potential change, and may actually induce change in and through itself' (Giddens, 2000, p. 249). This kind of awareness may help participants in heightening the possibility of change, but for me, reflexive awareness is more than that. Over the process of writing, I have realised that reflexivity sometimes provoked the darkest, the ugliest and the most confusing thoughts and biases of my own in respect of unveiling the unsaid. Reflexivity is important in our research in a way that 'challenges us to be more fully conscious of our own ideology, culture, and politics and that of our participants and our audience' (Etherington, 2004, p. 36).

Talking from different positions takes reflexivity to a new horizon. I cannot discern which voice is whose anymore. These multi-voiced accounts, like my identity and others, are intertwined; some are retained, some are altered, some are muffled,

some are twisted, some are outspoken and some are disappeared. This final voice is moving amongst the collective s/he, each individual of her/im, my autoethnographic self, and my researcher self. The outcome is reflexive knowledge which provides 'insight on the workings of the social world and insight on how that knowledge came into existence' (Hertz, 1997, p. viii). Throughout this study, my own perception of my participants greatly affects my writing and how I am perceived, in turn, will affect how I understand myself (Reinharz, 1997). 'To regard reflexivities as invitations towards liminality and towards constructing our identities not as 'nouns' and thus fixed, albeit open to change, but as 'verbs' and as discursive process may lead us into more creative (and messier) research conversations' (Speedy, 2008, p. 42). Our identities, as well as my reflexivity from different positions, have continuously shifted to a different space and have been represented in a different form.

A desire to produce either writing for academic purposes or pure creative writing (for my own interest) still haunts me, even though I ended up writing both. The 'researcher I' makes so much effort to devote herself to the 'correct' academic writing, while the 'participant I' always wants to write her own thinking freely without a care for academia or the limits of two dimensional paper, space and time. In retrospect, the 'participant I' and the 'researcher I', throughout the whole process from organising the workshops to writing this final text, always battled against each other for everything. During the workshops, while the 'participant I' was deeply engaging with others, the 'researcher I' policed the whole process at the same time. During this writing, the 'participant I' only made her voice heard while the story appeared. And the 'researcher I' criticized the 'participant I' and investigated the whole procedure and told the stories

for each of them. It is as if the 'participant I' stood in the inner circle being vulnerably watched, discussed, and written about, and the 'researcher I' stood in the outer circle strictly executing what she was supposed to do. Unfortunately the 'researcher I' always held on to the final decision, which is the text you are reading now. Interestingly, Callaway's words truly describe this self mumble: 'Reflexivity becomes a continuing mode of self-analysis and political awareness'(Hertz, 1997, p. viii). This text may seem an acceptable final negotiation but it makes me wonder about what would happen if I rewrote the whole piece from another 'I'. What kind of final text would I produce?

Is collective biography a promising methodology for Taiwanese people in the future?

There are some parts of our stories that cannot blend with others, but then other parts yearning for counterparts. The juxtaposition of singularity and collectivity in each chapter, therefore, became a necessity. This particularity in my final writing, on the one hand, emphasizes the individual differences in our identity shifting as well as the commonality between all of us, and on the other hand, shifts the focus back and forth between each individual and the s/he. Each individual's identity shifting is unique to her/imself, but we can always also find common elements. In my writing, the co-existence of singularity and collectivity, especially in terms of diasporic identity, articulates the specificity of collective biography.

Being a black sheep perhaps is, perhaps, a respected position in the UK. Taiwanese people have not been attuned to accepting relatively odd ones. In collective biography, we may be required to ask/challenge things about other peoples' memories.

The association between challenging and being aggressive seems fairly strongly held for Taiwanese people as we have been brought up to value the importance of harmony and concord. Even though over years s/he had managed to learn from British people/culture to keep criticism impersonal, I could sense that s/he avoided the challenge most of the time during the workshops. Is it that Taiwanese people cannot face challenge/criticism calmly? Or is the discord that they feel awkward about dealing with making them insecure, so that they would rather keep different voices in? Or is it that Taiwanese people always pursue harmony and concord? Each individual will have different answers to all these questions. We have not been taught how to deal wisely with conflict and discord in a group, but again, who has?

From my point of view, the practice of collective biography fits Taiwanese people for doing research on light topics. By light, I mean those topics which do not make those people in that particular group feel pressurised and emotion-laden and yet still have their interest aroused. It could take things further than they expect initially depending on how the group is progressing. Making a commitment to a group which pays no mind to the material world requires either a tremendous drive of self exploration and self-fulfilment, or great curiosity about human beings and related issues. The most distinctive feature of collective biography is writing so that it suits those who are willing to write and/or those who are fascinated by writing. The flexibility of this methodology opens the space for people from different cultures, different backgrounds and different ideologies to cross the boundaries, to transgress the familiar milieu, to challenge/support each other, and to make a close bond between each other. As Linnell et al. (2008) suggest, this method does not provide a solution, but

rather, raises more questions and opens more possibilities. I do not envisage a popular usage of this practice in the near future, but, as time goes by, I predict that it will grow due to the particularity of its emphasis on writing and also its surprisingly therapeutic effect. Watch this space!

EPILOGUE

30th May 2007, the flat on Beauford Road, UK

It was a usual morning. I was about to study after breakfast and daily chores. My mobile phone rang. I looked at the number. It was mum. She rarely called me on my mobile phone, unless it was something important. I cut it off and turned on skype. Mum was online. I double-clicked on her screen name and the line was connected.

'Ying-Lin, grandma passed away yesterday,' said mum, quietly.

6th June 2007, 11pm, Grandma's house, Taiwan

My brother picked me up from the airport and drove both of us back to Grandma's house where the funeral was taking place. Over two hours driving, my brother and I chatted casually to catch up. When our car was passing through the small village close to Grandma's, all of a sudden I did not feel like talking. A few minutes later, I heard the Buddhist chanting and saw uncles, aunties, cousins, mum, dad and my 7-year-old nephew from a distance as our car turned into the alley.

They all stood facing the temporary shrine and attentively listened to the Buddhist priests chanting. I nodded to them and came to stand next to my nephew silently. He raised his head, eyes wide open, and seemed so surprised but very happy

to see me. He put a big smile on his face and joyfully said 'aunty, you've come back!'

He almost jumped up and down with joy. I patted on his head and smiled slightly at him. The tears rolled down my face at the same time and I could not stop them. 'Don't cry, aunty,' he tried to reach my face and wipe my tears off. He could not understand at all. I hardly could say a word to explain, just patted his head.

When the 15 minutes chanting session finished, mum took me to grandma's freezing coffin, which was placed just behind the shrine. I saw grandma's face when mum opened the small window on the coffin. She said to grandma 'mum, Ying-Lin has come back to see you'.

I stepped forward to look at grandma lovingly, for the last time. Her face was a lot older than I remembered. Lifeless flesh had lost its elasticity. Her face was whiter than a piece of paper because of the make-up. She wore something ancient that I have never seen nowadays except for historical dramas on the telly. I clenched my teeth so hard in order to choke my tears back. This was not the grandma I remembered. This was not. Who was she? The tears suddenly welled up and blurred my eyes.

'Granny,' I murmured and wished she could hear me

'I'm back.' I whispered.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I

PARTICIPANTS WANTED! For a New/Unusual/Creative Research!

Have you seen/been aware of personal changes of yourself? Would you like to discover more of your personal changes since living abroad?

Introduction

Living in a completely different culture/country is less than easy, especially for us who are from Far East live in a western country, thus people somehow change to adapt the new environment. According to my personal experience, culture and language are the main factors of influencing identity. The aim of this research is to find out how Taiwanese people who are involved in British culture and language deal with the personal changes that take place, and/or if they are aware of those changes. I hope that, through sharing/writing/working together, we will be able to support each other living in the UK and also improve our awareness and understanding of those differences. Personal changes are taking place while we are living a different life from how we used to live. They can take the form of personality change, different concepts, attitudes toward identification, or even identity transformation.

How &When

At this stage, I, as a facilitator, plan to hold two workshops (subject to the availability and the amount of data) for collective biographical writing and our discussions in workshops will be recorded throughout on tapes or videos. In the course of two workshops, we may exchange our thoughts or reflections via email/online writing to enrich our data. Overall, you can choose whichever languages you are most familiar with. All procedure, including the preparation beforehand and the reflection/ assessment/examination for workshops afterwards, of running workshops will be supervised by a consultant. All workshops will be finished by the end of 2007.

Who & Where

The number of this group will be four to six people. The aim of this workshop is to produce something which is based on reading and writing, hence I plan to recruit participants who are literate in both English and Chinese. Members of the group will be Taiwanese who have been living in the UK for at least two years and have a certain degree of understanding of British culture. This research is based in Bristol.

Note

Please be sure you are aware that we are going to share our stories/thoughts that might be never disclosed. If you have an interest or any queries, feel free to email me.

Ying-Lin Hung
Email: yh4382@bristol.ac.uk or martha@upland.ae.ntu.edu.tw

你想要參與一個創新又與眾不同研究嗎？

自從你來到英國後，你是否意識到自己個人的改變？你想要發掘更多的自己嗎？

這是一個你不容錯過的機會。

簡介

相信您一定同意，住在一個和我們生長的文化和環境截然不同的國家實非易事，我們勢必得做某種程度的改變以適應環境。據我個人經驗，文化及語言是影響自我認同的主要因素。這個研究的目的是爲了要找出住在英國並融入英國生活文化及語言的台灣人是否有人格上的轉變或自我認同的改變。若有，您本身是否察覺。希望透過共同分享寫作，我們能夠彼此支持繼續生活在英國，並且能夠增進察覺自身轉變的能力。當環境改變時，我們自身的轉變較容易被察覺。而自身的轉變會透過不同的形式呈現，例如人格特質的改變，對認同抱持不同的觀念及態度，甚至於是自我認同的轉變。

形式及參與時間

在這階段裡，我希望舉辦共四天的工作坊（視參加者的意願作調整）以蒐集資料。資料包含我們在這四天內的寫作及討論，討論的部份會被錄音或錄影以便於做成文字記錄（非公開資料）。在工作坊期間，我們會交換觀念想法心得，在工作坊以外的時間，若需要會以電子郵件或上部落格寫作的方式來豐富我們的資料。你可以選擇您較熟悉的語言寫作，中英文不限。從工作坊的準備階段，進行期間及後續回顧的所有過程皆有督導做幕後協助。工作坊預計於 2007 年底前結束。

對象及地點

這個團體的理想人數爲四至六人。而資料之取得是基於寫作及閱讀，因此我希望可以招募到能夠讀寫中英文的參與者。此團體的成員必須是台灣人並且已在英國居住兩年以上，至 2007 年底仍然居住在英國。若能對英國文化有點認識更佳。此工作坊將於 Bristol 進行。

注意事項

請您確認您願意在此工作坊分享您的故事想法（並非全部，但或許是某種程度的分享），也許會是您從未發掘過的，但在工作坊進行之前，我們不知道會有什麼樣的主題或情緒發生。若您有興趣或是對此還有任何疑問，歡迎您來信詢問。

Email: yh4382@bristol.ac.uk or martha@upland.ae.ntu.edu.tw
洪瑛琳 敬上

Appendix II

Consent Form for Participants of Collective Biography Group - Self-Transformation of Taiwanese Diaspora

This is a research project that looks at how we, in any aspects, change ourselves while/after living in a different culture by means of sharing the writing of our own lived experiences in a collective biography group. The writing, which is never restricted to any types, will be collected from group members through workshops. All workshops will be tape recorded throughout.

Apart from our discussions and writings of workshops, we might take some individual interviews, which are subject to the necessity of the research process, to make the data rich.

In the sense of research project, some ethical guidelines regarding our workshops and interviews will need to be applied accordingly. They are as follows,

- Group work participants' anonymity and confidentiality is ensured by the researcher and fellow participants.
- Participants' anonymity and confidentiality will be ensured by the researcher if there are any individual interviews.
- Our workshops will be taped throughout and partly transcribed when needed. The main use of data will be our writings; however, transcriptions will be a supplement to this.
- Interviews (if there is any) will be partly transcribed if needed.
- All the transcripts will be passed back to participants before it is used.
- You may discuss your involvement outside this group but nobody else's.
- Participants will maintain the right of withdrawal.
- Researcher has the right to select participants to ensure a mixture and commonality of participants that meet research aims and requirements.
- Participants need to be aware of the commitment in terms of time to this research project.
- Ownership of articles (writings), journals (if there are any), and interviews (if needed) will be established.
- Participants can approach the researcher with queries through meetings, telephone and email.
- Participants need to be aware that our discussion during the workshop may bring out unexpected effects or issues and are able to recognise their needs arising.
- Researcher needs to check participants' being responsible for making sure they have somewhere/someone to turn to if the need arises.
- The only people who will know who said what in the group will be the participants.
- All the writings will be photocopied and stored under the researcher's protection, at the same time, they may be used/quoted/rephrased in researcher's dissertation, journal articles or conference presentation on local, national or international levels.

I agree to take part in the above research project and also understand all of the above. I understand that my participation is voluntary, that I can choose not to participate in part or all of the project, and that I can withdraw at any stage of the project without being penalized or disadvantaged in any way.

Name: _____ (printed name)

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix III

Research Questions and Ethical awareness

- Do the members of the group think they have changed since they came to the UK? If so, how and what do people find the difference about themselves between the time of arriving in the UK and the present?
- What kind and in what aspect do people think personal changes occur when they are dealing with different cultures and languages?
- How do people define their personal changes? Or do you use other terms to describe what has happened?
- Will we develop a particular group/collective/national identity based on our similar cultural background and experience of living abroad? If we do, what will this group/collective/national identity be?

We are a quite closed group in discussing personal or intimate issue. It is important that you are aware that the stories we share in our group will remain in this group only. If you would like to discuss your own issues/opinions/stories with other people who are outside our group, you are more than welcome to do so. However, please be aware that other people's stories will be left with them only for their own good.

Appendix IV

Workshop Guideline of Collective Biography Group

The theme on workshop 1: language vs. life (cultures)
(workshop 1 is to build up the relationship within the group)
The theme on workshop 2: language vs. identity (personal change)
The theme on workshop 3: life (cultures) vs. identity (personal change)
The theme on workshop 4: language, identity and culture

Workshop 3 timetable (Saturday, 5th April)

9:00- 9:20 Meeting, warming up (workshop starts from 9:20)
9:20-10:20 Talk about memories in our group (15mins each)
10:20-10:40 Write a short piece about memories by yourself
10:40-10:50 Coffee and Tea
10:50-12:00 Each person will read out their writing and hear reflections from the group of witnesses (15mins each)

12:00-12:50 Lunch and photocopy our writings

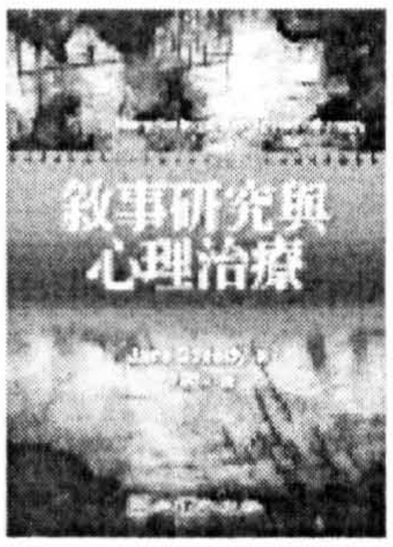
12:50-13:10 Re-write about memories by yourself
13:10-14:30 Each person will read out their writing and be asked specific questions about meanings, particularities, etc... (20mins each)
14:30-14:50 Re-write by yourself about memories and take away at the end of the day to complete
14:50- Finish and allow me to photocopy our writings

It would be welcomed if you cannot participate but would like to share your writing about the theme on each workshop. You can either write on your own blog or exchange emails within group.

Appendix V

瑪莎在英國胡亂寫

敘事研究與心理治療



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近期文章

Jul 03 2007 06:27

拜託拜託幫幫忙!!（置頂，7月24日更新）

分享:

嗚呼哀~~沒想到我也有這麼一天，在這裡求大家幫忙。

小的在英國混了快三年後，終於要開始最重要的論文了（逃之夭夭，也混太久了吧~~~），這一切的一切盡在不言中啊~~~~

說實在的，我不知道要花多少時間才能找到研究的參與者，因為這份研究不如一般研究做問卷或做訪談如此簡易，這要參與的朋友花一點時間，咱們要一起做一些事的，雖名為工作坊，但內容當然是我們自己（參與者們與我）來設計，比如到那個N星級飯店享受個下午茶或spa啊，或是到那個花園去賞個下午的花啊，這些都是可以的，只要有贊助者，因為小的實在很窮，學費自付，生活費自理，一切免動免偷，除本我找得到出錢的人爸，要不然五星級飯店只能在夢裡去了，嗚嗚~~~~

不過，話說回來，雖然沒能有高級的享受，但基本茶點或餐點的提供還是有的，各位需要的，小的當不遺餘力地個牛做馬也要我來！

原則上，我希望找到四至六名參與者（包括我），他必須住在英國至少有兩年的時間，不限性別，不限年齡，不論您的種族是啥，只要您願意抽空來參與，相信不會後悔！我把細詳的介紹放在後面，換到中英文版，

若有任何問題，儘管寫信給我。

網路上的朋友可否幫忙把這份文章轉出去，謝謝！

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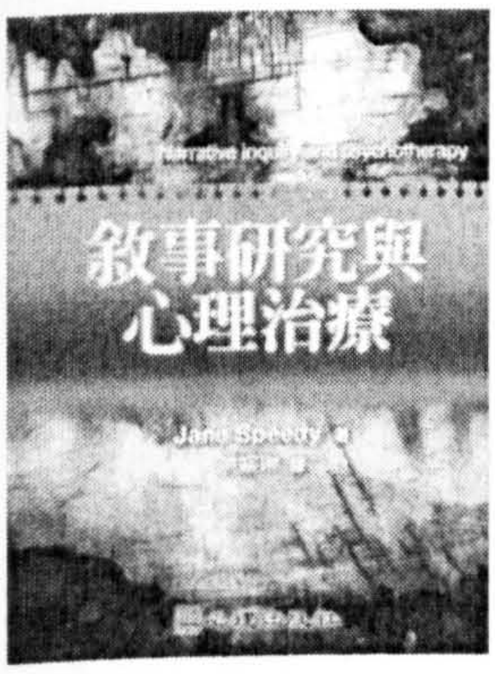
瑪莎在英國胡亂寫

敘事研究與心理治療



每天碎碎念

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近期文章

Jul 03 2007 06:27

拜託拜託幫幫忙!!（置頂，7月24日更新）

唉呀呀～～沒想到我也有這麼一天，在這裡求大家幫忙。

小的在英國混了快三年後，終於要開始最重要的論文了（迷之聲：也混太久了吧～～），這一切的一切盡在不言中啊～～～

說實在的，我不知道要花多少時間才能找到研究的參與者，因為這份研究不如一般研究做問卷或做訪談如此簡易，這要參與的朋友花一點時間，咱們要一起做一些事的，雖名為工作坊，但內容當然是我們自己（參與者們與我）來設計，比如到那個N星級飯店享受個下午茶或Spa啊，或是到那個花園去賞個下午的花啊，這些都是可以的，只要有贊助者，因為小的實在很窮，學費自付，生活費自賺，一切克勤克儉，除非我找得到出錢的大爺，要不然五星級飯店只能在夢裡去了。嗚嗚～～～

不過，話說回來，雖然沒能有高級的享受，但基本茶點或餐點的提供還是有的，各位需要的，小的當不遺餘力地做牛做馬也要找來！

原則上，我希望找到四至六名參與者（包括我），您必須住在英國至少有兩年的時間，不限性別，不限年齡，不論您的職業是啥，只要您願意抽空來參與，相信不會後悔！我把細詳的介紹放在後面，檢附中英文版。

若有任何問題，儘管寫信給我。

網路上的朋友可否幫忙把這份文章轉出去，謝謝！

----------我是分隔線----------

收到一個回應後才意識到原來我把這個團體搞得這麼像"心靈成長團體"。

在此我要鄭重重新聲明，這個研究方法是個很新的方法，事實上正式的學術名稱叫做"集合式自傳寫作"（Collective biography），我不放這名稱，一方面是因為肯定沒有人知道這是什麼鬼，另一方面我怕有人會害怕被逼寫作文（我自己就蠻不愛寫作的）。

我想探討的是不同文化對自身觀念的影響及衝擊，事實上很多人在自己的部落格中多多少少都有談到，我想這對在國外住久了的人都不陌生，只是平常很少拿出來說，或住久了很多事都習慣了，我自己就是。

但不可否認的是，只要用團體的形式，就會涉及倫理啊互相支持啊保密啊Blah Blah Blah之類的議題，不過，這不在這個團體討論範圍，這是我這苦命研究生在論文才要做的事。

希望簡單的說明可以多少釐清一些疑問。

29/07/2010

接近尾聲和新的開始

下一步

一點也不新的最新消息

何謂靈魂伴侶?

大迷失

手足舞蹈

孩子終於出世了~

失去了寫作的靈魂

親愛的

一團迷霧

最新迴響

07/29 luan:
恭喜賀喜~~洪博士耶!! 在英國...

07/19 Author reply:
我還會再回來, 但不保有沒有...

07/17 luan:
因為目前沒有去坐豪華超輪~玩...

07/14 Author reply:
哇~~~ 遊輪耶..... 等你下次...

07/10 luan:
martha~我放假了!!八月你要去...

參觀人氣

Hits Today: 16

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文章彙整

文章彙整

All Posts

文章分類

非關故事(2)

文化新味(13)

自我解析(14)

吃喝玩樂(26)

萬物之靈(13)

書卷深邃(32)

旅遊記事(57)

心情隨筆(49)

阿里不達(80)

往事如煙(7)

工作亂想(3)

我的連結

拜託拜託幫幫忙!!(置頂, 7月24日更新...

---------- 我是分隔線 ----------

哎呀呀~~~ 我又發現沒把一樣東西講清楚。
只要您是住在英國的人, 不管何處, 只要您不介意得到Bristol來參與這個研究(基本上大約四個月內總共兩次或四次吧!), 我都竭誠歡迎的! 因為畢竟Bristol我熟悉, 也有我要的資源, 借場地也比較不麻煩, 所以不一定要是住在Bristol的朋友。

---------- 我是分隔線 ----------

你想要參與一個創新又與眾不同研究嗎?

自從你來到英國後, 你是否意識到自己個人的改變? 你想要發掘更多的自己嗎?
這是一個你不容錯過的機會。

簡介

相信您一定同意, 住在一個和我們生長的文化和環境截然不同的國家實非易事, 我們勢必得做某種程度的改變以適應環境。據我個人經驗, 文化及語言是影響自我認同的主要因素。這個研究的目的是為了要找出住在英國並融入英國生活文化及語言的台灣人是否有人格上的轉變或自我認同的改變。若有, 您本身是否察覺。希望透過共同分享寫作, 我們能夠彼此支持繼續生活在英國, 並且能夠增進察覺自身轉變的能力。當環境改變時, 我們自身的轉變較容易被察覺。而自身的轉變會透過不同的形式呈現, 例如人格特質的改變、對認同抱持不同的觀念及態度, 甚至於是自我認同的轉變。

形式及參與時間

在這階段裡, 我希望舉辦共四天的工作坊(視參加者的意願作調整)以蒐集資料。資料包含我們在這四天內的寫作及討論, 討論的部份會被錄音或錄影以便於做成文字記錄(非公開資料)。在工作坊期間, 我們會交換觀念想法心得, 在工作坊以外的時間, 若需要會以電子郵件或上部落格寫作的方式來豐富我們的資料。你可以選擇您較熟悉的語言寫作, 中英文不限。從工作坊的準備階段, 進行期間及後續回顧的所有過程皆有督導做幕後協助。工作坊預計於2007年底前結束。

對象及地點

這個團體的理想人數為四至六人。而資料之取得是基於寫作及閱讀, 因此我希望可以招募到能夠讀寫中英文的參與者。此團體的成員必須是台灣人並且已在英國居住兩年以上, 至2007年底仍然居住在英國。若能對英國文化有點認識更佳。此工作坊將於Bristol進行。

注意事項

請您確認您願意在此工作坊分享您的故事想法(並非全部, 但或許是某種程度的分享), 也許會是您從未發掘過的, 但在工作坊進行之前, 我們不知道會有什麼樣的主題或情緒發生。若您有興趣或是對此還有任何疑問, 歡迎您來信詢問。

Email: yh4382@bristol.ac.uk or martha@upland.ae.ntu.edu.tw

洪瑛琳 敬上

---------- 我是分隔線 ----------

PARTICIPANTS WANTED! For a New/Unusual/Creative Research!

Have you seen/been aware of personal changes of yourself? Would you like to discover more of your personal changes since living abroad?

Introduction

29/07/2010

拜託拜託幫幫忙!!（置頂，7月24日更新...

Living in a completely different culture/country is less than easy, especially for us who are from Far East live in a western country, thus people somehow change to adapt the new environment. According to my personal experience, culture and language are the main factors of influencing identity. The aim of this research is to find out how Taiwanese people who are involved in British culture and language deal with the personal changes that take place, and/or if they are aware of those changes. I hope that, through sharing/writing/working together, we will be able to support each other living in the UK and also improve our awareness and understanding of those differences. Personal changes are taking place while we are living a different life from how we used to live. They can take the form of personality change, different concepts, attitudes toward identification, or even identity transformation.

How &When

At this stage, I, as a facilitator, plan to hold two workshops (subject to the availability and the amount of data) for collective biographical writing and our discussions in workshops will be recorded throughout on tapes or videos. In the course of two workshops, we may exchange our thoughts or reflections via email/online writing to enrich our data. Overall, you can choose whichever languages you are most familiar with. All procedure, including the preparation beforehand and the reflection/ assessment/examination for workshops afterwards, of running workshops will be supervised by a consultant. All workshops will be finished by the end of 2007.

Who & Where

The number of this group will be four to six people. The aim of this workshop is to produce something which is based on reading and writing, hence I plan to recruit participants who are literate in both English and Chinese. Members of the group will be Taiwanese who have been living in the UK for at least two years and have a certain degree of understanding of British culture. This research is based in Bristol.

Note

Please be sure you are aware that we are going to share our stories/thoughts that might be never disclosed. If you have an interest or any queries, feel free to email me.

Ying-Lin Hung

Email: yh4382@bristol.ac.uk or martha@upland.ae.ntu.edu.tw

Global Category:World Travel
Personal Category:書卷深淵
Previous post in this category: 詩經英文
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2005: 兩週英倫行之二 ~ 愛丁堡與格拉斯哥之首都爭奪戰

▲top

29/07/2010

[加]愛陶藝彩玩法+加拿大菜譜

[加]溫哥華記事

獨家蒐藏

台灣印行

美食

小隆與廚房的非洲風情

小小米拉的寫食廚房

怎麼兒的點心小棧

窮留學生懶人食譜

台灣人

拜託拜託幫幫忙!!（置頂，7月24日更新...

⊟ Comments (12)

Post Comment

#1 yuyu on 2007/07/01 08:01

幫不上忙...

祝妳祈禱~

嗚嗚~~~不知道要花多久的時間才會找到呀，我的網誌又沒什麼人來看，要怎麼辦才好呢?

martha0523replied on 2007/07/01 20:55

#2 Winnie on 2007/07/03 08:15

哎~~我好想當你的participant喔~

但是我在這裡住不到兩年>"<

要找應該是不難啦~相信大家都很樂意幫忙的...

但是...會不會找到最後都是台灣人啊XD

#3 Winnie on 2007/07/03 08:18

對不起~~~~我笨了>"<

你明明就是要找台灣人~哈XD

但是我覺得我內在轉變很大ㄟ~

可惜不能跟你分享...

其實有沒有住兩年並沒有太大的關係，如果你自覺內在有很大的轉變，也願意分享，我當然還是歡迎，有人願意來當我的participants有什麼不好呢？嘿嘿！不過，如果你九月離開明年一月才回來，這恐怕就有點困難了，原則上我是希望今年把工作坊做完，不過也要看有沒有參與者就是了。

如果時間上沒辦法配合，我還是很希望可以跟你聊聊這方面的主題，對我們自己和對我的研究一定會有幫助的，因為現在還在瞎子摸象的階段啊。

martha0523replied on 2007/07/04 00:54

#4 twcurrycat on 2007/07/09 16:48

not able to help nither...

haven't stayed in uk for 2 years yet...

So can't help at all...

Hi Cindy,

well, staying for 2 years is not the essential condition. You've been in the UK before your stay this time, haven't you? So I guess you might have some thoughts of cultural/personal issues to say?? I'm just guessing. I don't mind you haven't stay longer than 2 years. And also, you are a very representative example for people who were students then becoming residents here. Would you be interested to take part in?

martha0523replied on 2007/07/09 20:12

#5 flyhi on 2007/07/10 18:52

邀請你來參加pixnet寵物活動

不知你有沒想去寵物展..(too far i think)

有免費的票可以提供參加抽獎喔~~

可以到PIXNET活動網頁看看唄http://blog.pixnet.net/OPTIMA1/post/6022827

PO一篇文吧..期待喔!

#6 twcurrycat on 2007/07/12 16:25

happy to help

Martha

I am happy to help.

Just let me know what I can do for u.

U know my email anyway!

:)

Keep my fingers crossed for u!

Thanks Cindy,

I've sent the email to you.

martha0523replied on 2007/07/13 17:51

#7 flyhi on 2007/07/13 23:21

喔喔~~我幫不上忙..但我可以幫你禱告!!上帝一定會HELP滴!God Bless You!Good Luck~~~~~~

謝謝你!

martha0523replied on 2007/07/23 01:34

#8 May on 2007/07/24 18:04

Hello 瑪莎

看來我們學的東西好像有點類似!

你開出來的條件，除了不住在Bristol（有去玩過，醬算嗎？）以外，都符合。不知道醬幫得上忙嗎？

May

Hi May,

真的嗎？其實我唸的是純研究法的東西，這些主題是我自己胡亂想的。你唸什麼呢？

不住Bristol沒關係，只要您不介意到Bristol來參加研究就行了。您有興趣參加嗎？

謝謝您的回覆，真的！讓我那快要熄滅的希望又點燃了起來。

Martha

martha0523replied on 2007/07/24 18:41

Private Comment

#10 Josie on 2007/08/29 02:13

hello,

看到你在Hello UK上的留言，覺得很有趣,我在UK唸書然後留下來工作，現在將近3年了.來UK之前去NZ唸語言...覺得這幾年的國外生活...改變許多...生活方式，價值觀.

才剛到Bath度假回來...Bristol離Bath不遠，想說去一趟大概要花3-4小時車程.

可以知道你目前workshop的時間安排嗎？如果有可能的話,希望可以參加.

Josie

#11 Josie on 2007/08/29 02:16

my email address

Sorry that I forgot to leave my email. Here it is.

josie.c.yu@gmail.com

All the best,

Josie

謝謝你的回應！真的很高興你願意參加耶！！我寄email給你了。

martha0523replied on 2007/08/29 06:29

#12 May on 2007/09/19 05:35

拜託拜託幫幫忙!!（置頂，7月24日更新...

哈囉！不知道我合不合格
2001/10-2003/10 住在拉丁美洲 說西班牙文
2004/2-8 住在倫敦 說英文
2005/10-2007/9 住在非洲 說法文
2007/9-2008/9 又回到倫敦 又要說英文
之後就不清楚了！應該還是繼續留在倫敦吧！

附帶一提，我從來沒有交過台灣男友，
不知道為什麼，只有洋鬼子會對我有興趣。

離開台灣已經六年，我對這個題目很有感觸。
希望可以幫上你的忙，
如果你能出車錢和吃飯錢的話。

I've emailed you.
martha0523replied on 2007/09/19 20:27

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